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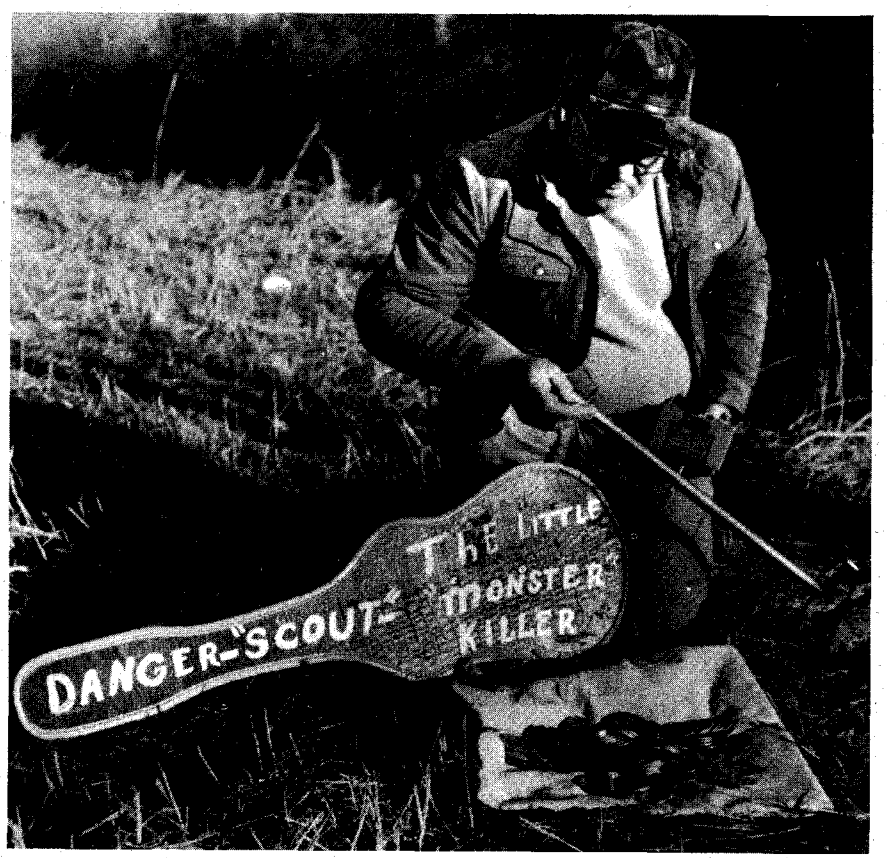

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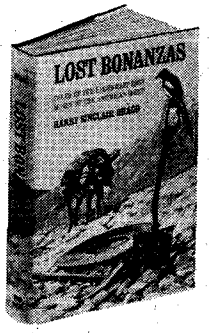

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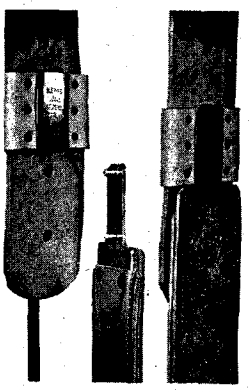

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July-August, 1967
Volume 14, No. 6
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True West

All True—All Fact—Stories of the Real West

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Cover: Larry Smitherman

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KING of the WESTERNS

THAT'S what I'm calling him—Walt Coburn, that is—and if anybody wants to contest the title, get ready to slap leather. Most of you know that when you read about slapping leather in the old western pulps it meant "Go for your gun!" In Hosstail western it means—"Meet me in the cowpen at the crack of dark and we'll shoot it out with slingshots using the nearest available material until one of us stinkers can't breathe good any longer."

Don't miss Walt's "My Thirty Years as a Pulp Writer" in this issue. You who read the pulps are bound to find it completely fascinating. Those who wrote western fiction in those days I believe will consider it priceless. And even you western buffs who never read a pulp (is it possible?)—well, it should be a *must* on your list in order to learn more about a "golden era" that I think is gone forever. Walt (unless somebody was jealous) was a sort of god to those of us who were getting one-fourth to one-half cent per word in those days—and maybe one cent if you were *good!*—while he was pulling down five cents per word for as many as he could turn out.

If he had written me a letter back then, I would have jumped off a fourteen-foot cliff and banged my head on a rock just to see if it would hurt! He has written me many in the past several years and, although I haven't banged my head on a rock as yet, I did persuade him to write his life as a pulp writer and I feel that this is a rather significant "first." His letters are as interesting as his stories.

S. Omar Barker, who is still prolific, and also one of my all-time favorites, and who finally riz right on up to big time like the *Saturday Evening Post*, wrote me, in part, not long ago, "You fellers sure hit the jackpot when you signed on ol' Walt Coburn for his tally-book of reminiscences. It's the first feature I read in TRUE WEST, and the one I enjoy the most.

"That ol' cowboy not only 'was there and helped skin'em,' he also knows how to bring the old times to life in words, always with just the right touch of humor, and always with a sure-fire understanding of ranch folks—and of horses, too, which ain't too common among writers.

"To put it short, he makes a feller feel like he's been there with him and his old-timers in their cow work and their hijinks—or at least wish you had been. Keep your rope on him, Joe. You ain't liable to find another as salty. Love but no kisses, like always, (Signed 'Squire' S. Omar Barker—The ᔕO B)"

I COULD go on about S. Omar for pages. You know, I believe there is a sort of feeling, not common in any other fraternity, that seals the old boys together who went through the *really hard* times of pulp writing, like grab-fast glue. I've been looking through a stack of old pulp western magazines that is higher than a tick on a giraffe's ear. Actually, those were the good old hard days. Many of us were just getting in, starting at *one-fourth* cent per word and working like the very devil merely to live. When I started hitting regularly, I was *still* getting one-fourth cent per word and had to write two 5,000-word short stories per week to keep my wife and baby in food and a lean-to over their heads to keep out the rain! Multiply one-fourth cent by 10,000 words and you'll see that I made $25 per week—and, chum—that was a hard $25 to make! When I finally hit one-half cent per word, I thought I had it made! Three-fourths cents—that just couldn't last! Then when it went to one cent (brother, they moved you up one-fourth cent per word in those days and they moved you up slow!)—well, I was filthy rich at one cent per word. I even sluffed off and wrote only one 5,000 word story per week and rolled in wealth! Those were still depression days. A good neighbor of mine (man named Cotton) told me just yesterday that he was richer when he was making $200 per month than he's ever been since. Money *bought* something in those days.

I'll never forget when my name first appeared on a cover. You just don't get that feeling *anymore!* This was during the early 1940s and there were others on the cover like Johnston McCulley, Lee Floren, T. T. Flynn, Frank Bonham, Harold F. Cruickershank, Foghorn Clancy, William Heuman, Harry Van Demark, Gunnison Steele, John Latham, Cliff Campbell, T. W. Ford, Brett Austin, Archie Joscelyn (if you are getting tired of this list, skip on—*thousands* won't get tired of it! It represents them, their fathers, some kin—it covers a big territory!), Raymond W. Porter, Ruel McDaniel, Tom Roan, Les Savage, Jr., Hugh B. Cave, L. B. Holmes, Tom W. Blackburn, Dev Klapp, William R. Cox, Harry F. Olmsted, and so many, MANY more! And, of course, there were the old stand-bys like Coburn, Max Brand, S. Omar Barker, Fred Gipson, J. Edward Leithead, H. Bedford Jones, Curt Bishop, and many more.

I REALIZE I am talking more about the field and myself than Walt, but he covers himself pretty blamed well and there isn't much that I can add but admiration. A piece like his gets you to thinking and it fills me so full of nostalgia (my secretary can spell it) that you just get started and can't quite stop. Like the time when that first baby came. I had to bail the kid out of the hospital with a $40 check from a series I was writing then (in the 1930s!) about a sawed-off Englishman gone west. The hero's name was Christopher Adolphus

(Continued on page 68)

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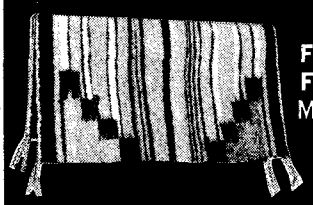

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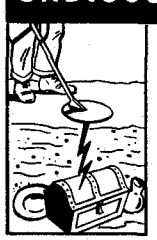

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Truly Western

Chic Parker

Dear Mr. Small:

In 1958, I saw on the front cover of your magazine, "Pat Garrett's Last Ride." Knowing the story of that ride, I purchased my first copy of TRUE WEST, and have not missed a copy of any of your magazines since.

My brother, Chic, worked for Wayne Brazel in 1909 and he came to our home in Alamogordo with Chic and became acquainted with us. Recently Chic, my wife, and I visited Alamogordo and the surrounding country. We attended the Retired and Senior Citizens' get-together and met a few people whom we knew in 1907-'08-'09.

In 1909 Chic, along with Gene Baird and Wayne Brazel, brought 250 head of cattle through the White Sands one night. From the old Baird Ranch east to a cove where there was good grass and water, I think was about five miles. To our knowledge it was the only time cattle had been taken through the Sands.

We took Chic on the road into the White Sands, and we climbed a big dune. By picking out Dead Man's Canyon, he was able to place the old Baird Ranch and then show us the route taken to the cove on the east side where he and Wayne had a tent to sleep in. I just wondered what went through the old boy's mind as he looked back and forth on the route taken many years ago.

We take one or two trips a year into the western states, as we like to visit the old ghost towns and museums. The old saying, "you can't take the country out of the boy"—well, the Old West is still in my blood, and I could go on and on about it. Many articles in your magazines are about places we have been; or, after reading the article, we go there. —Jack Carter, 8408 Painter Avenue, Whittier, California.

The Atoka Track

Gentlemen:

I just completed the article "The Atoka Track" by William S. Furno, and I cannot express the enjoyment I received. I was born in McAlester and spent a great deal of my childhood in Lehigh and Coalgate. I had relatives working in the mines, and my grandfather was a businessman in Lehigh. My grandmother, Mrs. Juliette LeFevre and uncle, Gaston LeFevre are still residing in Lehigh.

The remains of some of the mines are still in existence, and the Hickory Hill mines, now full of water, making excellent bass fishing.

I read your magazine regularly, as on many occasions the articles contain facts about Pinkerton's, by whom I am employed. I would like to mention that Lehigh was one of the hideouts of the once notorious Pretty Boy Floyd. I have heard my grandmother and her neighbor and close friend, Josephine Greely, tell of meeting and talking with him and some of the happenings when he was in the area.—W. R. Lacy, P. O. Box 61228, Houston, Texas.

Dear Mr. Small:

Reading "The Atoka Track" brings back my early days. From 1918 to early 1930 I followed the circuit of county and state fairs in Missouri, Kansas, Arkansas, and Oklahoma, and lived in Picher a while.

Having a photo cabinet, I took a picture of Rain-in-the-Face. I could have taken it at the 101 Ranch. I hope someone knows for sure.

I lived a week in the 72 Hotel in Picher in 1918 and had to tack newspapers on the wall to cover the cracks. The theater was built like a barn with dirt floor, and benches for seats.

On Saturday we would get a cab and head for Joplin. It only cost fifty cents. We went to the Silver Dollar and stayed till it closed.—Mrs. Donna E. Phillips, 6183 Balcom Cyn. Rd., Moorpark, California 93021.

The picture taken by Mrs. Donna E. Phillips

Dear Folks:

After much head-scratching, phone-calling, and face to face button-holing, it has become apparent that the photo entitled "View of the Jumbo Mines" in my story, "The Atoka Track," is not that of old #2 Mine which once existed near Coalgate, but is of an asphalt mine formerly in operation north of Antlers, Oklahoma. The absence of railroad tracks confirms this conviction and I reckon Joseph B. Latimer of 2832 Esterbrook Drive, Dallas, Texas, is entitled to a medal with palms for having spotted my error. There were few, if any, mines in the area which depended on teams and wagons to haul away the coal.—William S. Furno.

April '67 Cover

Dear Sir:

I am writing in reference to the picture on the cover of your April issue of TRUE WEST. The picture was of Louie Ninepipe and my grandfather. My grandfather's name was given as Orlaine Findlay, but his true name was Antoine Buck Finley.

We, the family, wish to thank you for such a clear close-up, as none of us had such a nice picture of him. It brought back many fond and beautiful memories. We were all very proud to see it.

I hope you correct Grandfather's name, as he well deserves it. We called him Skepah, which in Indian means "grandfather on the father's side." When it is on the mother's side, grandfather is known in Indian as Seelah.—Henrietta Finley Brown, 223 North 16th, St. Maries, Idaho 83861.

Reply from Lauretta Studios: This clears up a mystery for us. May we explain? When we took the pictures of these people we told each of them we would send them copies of the pictures, which we also took in black and white. We got the names of each of them, and wrote when we had them ready. We heard from everybody except "Orlaine Findlay." We couldn't seem to find him anywhere. The address we had for him (which I am sure he gave us) was St. Ignatius, Montana. We wrote this address several times, and the mail was returned unclaimed. Then we wrote Louie Ninepipe. He said he didn't know anyone named that, but that he did know a man named Antoine Finley. It didn't occur to us that this might be the man we were looking for—we were so sure he gave the name of Orlaine Findlay. Then I sent a letter to him in care of the Agent for Indian Affairs at Dixon on advice of the Indian artist, Mrs. Lochrie, with no better luck. So we gave up on him, and we are glad to find out what the trouble was. We regret the error.—Mrs. L. M. Walkup, Lauretta Studio, 2810 Phillips St., Butte, Montana 59701.

Zackson's Gold

Dear Sir:

When my dad was a boy he lived on Trout Creek with his mother, brother and sister. Trout Creek lies between Phillipsburg and Anaconda, Montana. His name was William Carey.

He told of a tall man, packing a long rifle, stopping one day to get a meal. Said his name was Zackson. He had just come from where the East Fork Reservoir now is located. A dog was with him.

After he ate, he showed my dad and brother and sister a whiskey flask half full of fine gold; said he got it up the East Fork of Rock Creek. He then went

(Continued on page 69)

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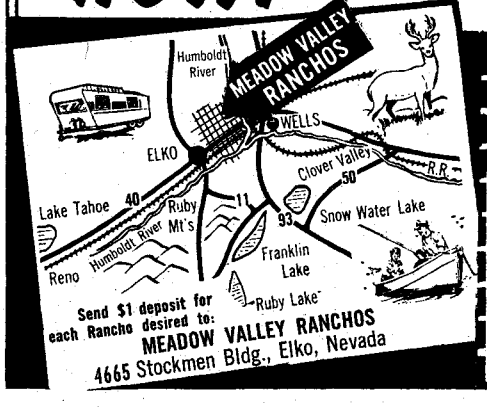

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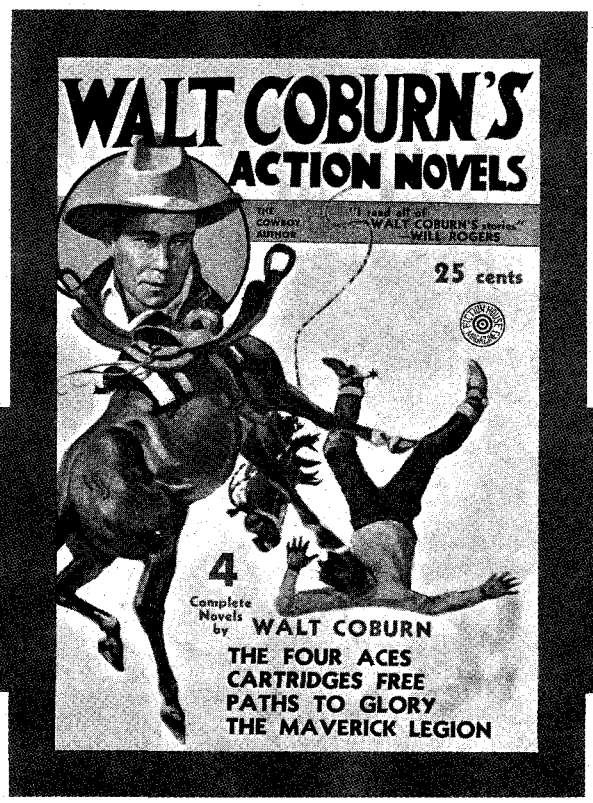
MY THIRTY YEARS AS A PULP WRITER

By WALT COBURN

Photos Courtesy Author



When a forty-a-month cowhand turned pulp writer, Walt says it was like riding a treacherous bronc that swapped ends and sunfished and was apt to come over backwards at any time!

Walt Coburn's popularity led Fiction House to publish a pulp made up solely of his stories.

IN ORDER to fully explain my qualifications as a writer of western fiction for the pulp paper magazines, it is necessary to go back to my birth on October 23, 1889 at White Sulphur Springs, in the Territory of Montana. Because there was a time in my boyhood when I was sure prideful about being born in Montana Territory. The fact that Montana reached the status of statehood a month or two after my birth did not in any way, shape or form, deny the fact that I first saw the light of day in Montana Territory. That and being the son of a pioneer cattleman was indeed a proud heritage that has lasted throughout the years.

Let it be said here and now that the Creator of that breed of man called the cowhand, cowboy and cattleman, for some reason known only to the Señor Dios, selected this cowhand-writer among the chosen few to record the history of that hardy breed of pioneer, be it fiction or fact. For looking back along my years of writing I know full well, by the grace and generosity of God, that has been my destiny, and if in any measure I have failed to fulfill that destiny, the fault is mine.

It is by that same token that I now recall an unkind remark by a so-called historian that I was prostituting whatever gift of writing talent I had. There was only one answer to that barbed remark. I was writing for money. Not posterity. For a former forty-a-month cowhand the big checks I received were a fabulous fortune. I'd never had it better and I spent the money with a prodigal hand.

My father's Circle C Ranch in the Little Rockies of northeastern Montana was established in the hard winter of 1886-87. It joined the Fort Belknap Indian Reservation and it was there I grew up with the young Assiniboines and Gros Ventres my age, and listened to the talk of the Old Ones in their lodges.

The Little Rockies, with its mining camps and small cowtowns, was the stomping ground of the notorious Kid Curry Gang. The Little Rockies was the north end of the old Outlaw Trail, and as a youth at the Circle C I knew Kid Curry and his brothers, Loney and Johnnie. I was at the ranch when Kid Curry and three of Butch Cassidy's Wild Bunch held up the Great Northern train at Wagner, Montana, in 1901. At that time the Little Rockies was the last of the lawless outlaw country.

As the son of a Montana pioneer cattleman who first came to Montana in 1863, I was born and reared in a heritage that was in my blood and a part of my being. It was when I was working as a cowhand on the Circle C that I gained first-hand knowledge of the cow country as well as outlaws, lawmen, gamblers and Indians.

IN 1916 the Circle C outfit sold out, lock, stock and barrel to the Matador Land & Cattle Company, a Scotch syndicate which had large holdings in South America and ranches in Dakota and Texas. So I rolled up my roundup bed, sacked my saddle, and took the train to Globe, Arizona, where the Coburn Cattle Company had bought out the remnants of three large cow outfits on the San Carlos Apache Indian Reservation.

It was rough mountainous country, stood straight up and down. Too rough to run a roundup wagon, it had to be worked with a pack outfit, with two brush-popper cowhands in range branding camps between roundups. Because it was well nigh impossible for the roundups to get a clean work in that rough terrain, we packed running irons on our saddles. With our ketch ropes tied to the saddle horns we roped and branded any unbranded mavericks and big calves where we found them, keeping tally by the ears we cut off. We roped any big outlaw steer we found, tied him up with tie-ropes to tree trunks until he quieted down, then sawed off the sharp pointed horns with a dehorning saw. Then led the steer down the slant to a trap pasture where there was good feed and water. And during the warm summer months there was always cows and steers to be roped and tied down and doctored for screw worms.

The handling of cattle, especially the

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gentle moving of a beef herd on the Montana Plains country was entirely different from handling wild cattle in that rough country in Arizona.

I'd smashed hell out of my right ankle back in 1914 and it had left me a little crippled for life. After a long day's ride I'd pull up lame as a ringboned stove-up old cowhorse, and cut me a stout mesquite stick to hobble around camp. It slowed me down when I'd get off my horse to rassle down and hogtie a big calf or yearling maverick. I had to "bust" any outlaw steer I roped to keep from getting hooked and tromped while I tied its hind legs with a hogging string.

I was just getting onto the lay of that rough Arizona country and was on my way to being a fair-to-middling brush-popper cowhand when World War I broke out. In spite of my ring-boned ankle I somehow managed to enlist as a cadet in the Air Force branch of the U.S. Signal Corps, and was discharged on April 1, 1919, after a year and a half wearing a uniform.

While I was in the army the Coburn Cattle Company sold out their outfit on the San Carlos at Globe, and bought the Horseshoe Ranch, a large spread in the rough Bloody Basin country near Prescott, Arizona. So I hired out to them at forty a month. On May 1, 1919 I got in a pile-up. Tied hard and fast I roped a big two-year-old maverick bull that went over a brushy cutbank, dragging me and my horse after him. I wound up with a busted kneecap, fifteen miles from the Horseshoe Ranch.

"Your days as a cowhand are over and done with," was the verdict of the cow country doctor at Prescott who did the patchwork on the busted kneecap, and I took his word for it.

It was a bitter pill for a man who had been born and reared as a cowhand, whose sole aim in life was to own his own cow outfit, and whose one and only vocation was that of cowpunching. To be set afoot in the prime of life was a gutshot, but it was up to me to make the best of it.

BACK in San Diego, California, where my widowed mother lived, I'd discarded my crutches and was gimping around with a cane when I happened to run into my squadron commander at the Brass Rail. He told me to come over to North Island where I'd been stationed during the war—that Uncle Sam was hiring civilians who had been stationed there. And I did. It was like old home week.

Two of us were assigned to the job of assembling the crated new Jennies. Me and a former Master Sergeant uncrated our first plane and assembled it in the big steel hanger, installing the motor after being tried out on the test block. When she was ready for the air we tested her out for a week. It was the plane Eddie Rickenbacker used on his cross-country flight to Washington, D.C. To the best of my recollection I was getting $125.00 a month, living in an army tent on North Island five days a week. Saturday and Sunday I spent most of my time in the Los Banos swimming pool at the foot of Broadway and in a few weeks time I was able to walk without limping. About six or eight months later, Uncle Sam ran out of money and I was reading the want ads in the newspapers.

A week later I was on my way to Parker, Arizona, as stake artist and chainman on a U.S. Indian Department survey gang on the Mojave Reservation. One afternoon I was lazying around in the tent with a beat-up copy of *Adventure Magazine*, faulting a western story with the critical eye of a cowpuncher, picking it to pieces. There were enough mistakes to convince me the writer didn't savvy anything about cowpunching. It was only after I'd finished the yarn, which had enough plot and character delineation to make good reading in spite of my biased viewpoint, that I looked to see who the author was. It was written by Robert J. Horton. That name sure as hell rang the dinner bell, and no mistake.

The author was the same old friend and drinking companion I had known back in Great Falls. The same Bob Horton who was sports editor for the Great Falls *Tribune*, with a column under the by-line of "Sporticus." I'd been completely out of touch with Bob for a number of years and had no idea he had started writing western fiction.

In re-reading the story I was vaguely reminded of one of the windies I'd spilled to Bob when we were in our cups at the Mint Saloon. The nucleus of the plot was the same.

According to my boneheaded cowhand way of thinking, if an Eastern tenderfoot like my old friend Bob Horton could sit down and bat out a fiction story of my own cow country, I certainly could do the same. I spent the rest of that Sunday afternoon writing a lengthy letter to Bob Horton in care of *Adventure*, asking his advice regarding my tackling writing fiction stories for a living, informing him that my cowpunching days were over.

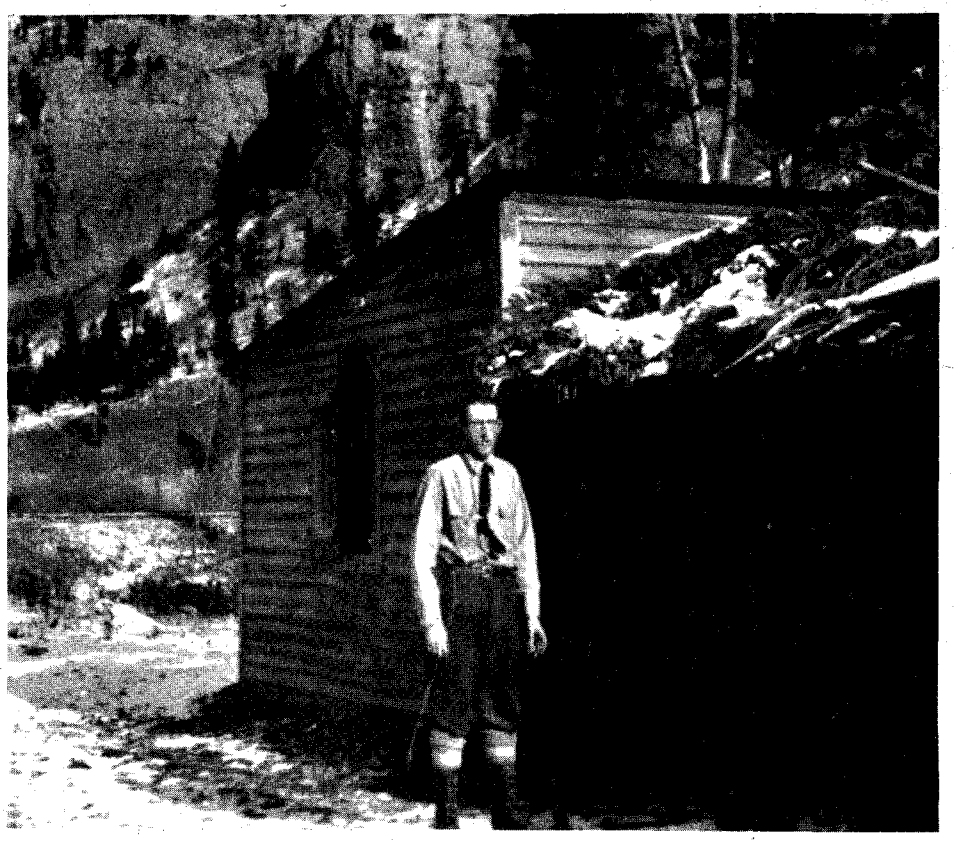
The following week I received a lengthy letter from Bob, who was now living in New York, encouraging me to start writing immediately. Without delay. When Bob Horton was enthusiastic about something he was like a prairie fire backed by a forty-mile wind. He said the only way to start in writing fiction was to get at it right now—to beg, borrow or steal a typewriter—get a ream of good bond paper and a ream of second sheets and carbon paper. He enclosed the carbon copy of one of his stories that had been sold, to give me a working sample.

I was instructed to send him a copy of my manuscript for his criticism and blue-penciling, informing me in no uncertain terms that I was his "protege" from now on out—that it was my letters to him written from the Circle C Ranch that gave him the idea for writing western stories, and because of those letters he was now sitting on top of the world. He predicted, in his outgoing exuberance, that someday, if I could weather the storm of rejection slips, I'd climb the rungs to the top of the ladder.

IT WAS that first letter from Robert J. Horton that launched me on the rough and rocky road as a writer of western fiction for the pulp magazines. Something of his absolute confidence in my unproven ability as a writer, along with his buoyant enthusiasm, must have rubbed off on my hide because it has lasted throughout the long years.

That first letter from old Sporticus

Robert Horton, Coburn's close friend and guiding light, at his cabin at Belts, Montana.



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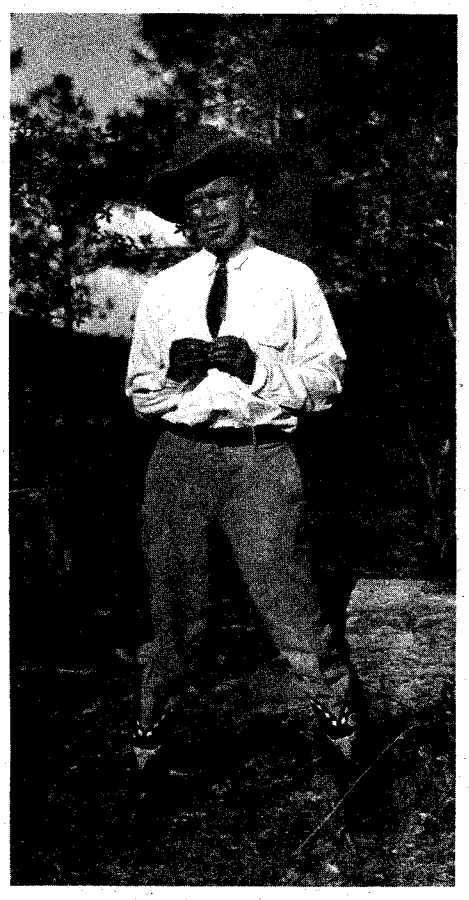

Walt Coburn in 1927

marked the beginning of a somewhat sporadic correspondence between us that was unpredictable as the weather, until his untimely death some years ago. In his letters there was invariably some sage advice, along with the sometimes caustic criticism of a manuscript, but the barbed words were blunted by his dry humor. I regret to say the letters Bob Horton wrote me have been lost in my travels. But some of his advice, given in that first letter, has stuck in my memory like a sandburr to a saddle blanket.

For example, the few rules he laid down at the beginning, long before I sold my first story were: Buy a copy of Roget's *Thesaurus* and study it as you would a text book—quit reading western stories of any kind. Because no present-day writer of western fiction knows any more about the cow country than you do, reading their stories would only confuse you. But read every story written by O. Henry, because that man has mastered the art and craftsmanship of the short story. Read the books and short stories of Jack London, because red meat is in everything he writes. Also read the books of Joseph Conrad. Study the style of those authors, then forget the stories, and as time goes on you will develop your own individual style without being aware of it.

Live each story as you write it. Live the part of your characters. Let your characters work for you to develop the story as you dream it out. Set your working schedule at four hours each day, the limit of creative writing. Any hours after four or five will be forced writing and apt to be wooden. Let your first copy tell the story. Don't attempt any rewrite or polishing, or you're apt to ruin the yarn.

Once you get onto the ropes with your two-finger hunt-and-peck system on the typewriter, you should make a fairly clean first copy, and be able to knock out 2,000 words a day. And remember that every time a manuscript is returned with a rejection slip, it will be a gutshot. Also a hard earned lesson, because the story is lacking in some way, shape or form. So read it over carefully, find out what is wrong. But don't try to rewrite the rejected story. Start another yarn. Let each rejection slip count as a lesson and profit by it. The School of Rejection Slips is one of hard knocks. It takes guts to make the grade, but if you have the gift of a natural writer all hell and high water can't stop you from reaching the goal.

Those were some of the rules set down by Bob Horton, a newspaperman of the old school, and one of the best writers of western pulp fiction of his era. And I took his advice in every rule he set down for me to follow, as mentor, guide, philosopher and friend in need.

Thanks to Robert J. Horton I had the courage to continue on through the several years of my writing career before I sold my first story.

MEANWHILE I had to work at various jobs making a living. After the survey job at Parker, I worked as a railway mail clerk for a while. Then at Del Mar, California, I worked for the South Coast Land Company which owned the Del Mar Hotel (then called The Stratford Inn). I ran the garage and worked as third engineer at the hotel power plant, and as a lifeguard during the summer months, pecking in my spare time at my rented typewriter.

It was during the lean years while I was working in Del Mar that I got tossed around and almost gored on the sharp horns of a dilemma, and like the matador in the bullring I faced the moment of truth. At that certain time at the beginning of my writing career it seems I came face to face with one of the most crucial and monumental decisions of my life.

I was earning fifty dollars a month plus room and board at the employees' dining room at the hotel and sleeping quarters in the cubbyhole loft of the garage. During the summer months I earned ten dollars extra for lifeguard duty in the afternoons. This was all on the credit side of the ledger.

On the debit side, every month on the exact date I had to pay thirty-five bucks on a signed contract to a used car dealer called Honest John for the second-hand Model T, one-seated runabout flivver I'd bought when I was a civilian employee at Rockwell Field, North Island. An additional five bucks on the beat-up Oliver typewriter I was renting from a local realtor. And there was the ream of bonded manuscript paper, a ream of second sheets and a box of carbon paper and large mailing envelopes (with return postage enclosed) to drain the nickels and pennies. So, even during the summer with the added ten bucks for lifeguard duty, it was mighty slim pickin's. I did my own laundry in the garage. I used discarded bathing suits for underwear.

After two years of writing and nothing but rejection slips to show for it, and at the end of the month flat broke, a prayer and high hopes went out with each manuscript that was foredestined to return with a printed rejection slip. Each one took a heavy toll. Licking my wounds for a day or two, I walked the long stretch of sandy beach, swimming out through the breakers and staying out until I was pooped, then riding in on a big comber. Summer and winter, every day regardless of weather, pea soup fog or rain, it was good medicine for what ailed me. And by and by, when the dreams returned, I'd bat out another beginner's masterpiece.

It was sometime in December with another sad and sorry, dead-broke Christmas coming up and two more rejection slips to add to my collection of failures, that my future prospects as a writer of fiction loomed up bleak and barren. I'd put on my bathing suit and worked out chinning myself on the horizontal bar at the bath house, then shadow boxing and trotting the deserted beach, before I swam out. I rassled around with a mess of kelp to warm up for the swim through the breakers and around the long pier where Al Howarth, the engineer at the powerhouse, bundled up in mackinaw, cast his line to catch fish for his female cat and her litter of kittens. John Bludworth, the tall, grizzled deputy sheriff was there to keep Al company, both sharing the secret opinion that I'd lost a few marbles to swim on a cold rainy day in an ice cold ocean, with the winter riptides cutting a wide channel.

Once the first chill was gone, it was much warmer in the ocean than it was in the cold wind on the end of the pier,

Walt Coburn wrote the leading feature in this 1927 issue of *Lariet Story* Magazine, published by Fiction House.

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and besides I was swimming off the results of rejection slips.

OFTENTIMES I'd ride out in the country with Les Zurner who had the rural mail route contract, leaving the garage in charge of the mechanic, Chick Evans, who did what repair work to automobiles there was to be done. Chick had done several hitches in the U. S. Cavalry and we got along first rate.

On that particular morning in December when I rode out with Les in his old second-hand Packard I sensed that he had something on his mind besides his hat. Some sort of proposition he wanted to lay on the line but didn't quite know how to open the jackpot. Working as Les did in the Del Mar post office, helping his father-in-law who was postmaster, he was aware of every returned manuscript that came back to me to roost. Finally Les dropped the bombshell.

"How would you like to make a thousand dollars?" Just like that. Right out of the cold overcast sky. It sure caught me off balance and I figured Les must be ribbing me, and I answered giving him back his change and six-bits to boot.

"Robbing the United States mail," I said, "is a Federal rap. But if there's a Chinaman's chance, I'm your huckleberry, Les." And, so help me Judas, I halfway meant what I said. "You're talkin' to one of Butch Cassidy's Wild Bunch," I added.

"Nothin' like that," Les spoke hastily. The idea of robbing his father-in-law's post office sort of shocked him. "No larceny involved. A thousand bucks clear. That's the solid truth. I'm not kiddin' you. Cash on the barrelhead. Money is no concern to a millionaire."

"What's the deal, Les?" I knew a man didn't get handed a thousand smackers without he earned it. I was looking for the skunk in the woodpile. There was bound to be a badger game somewhere with this old country boy holding the dirty end of the stick. But a thousand bucks was a thousand bucks, and I was willing to take a few chances.

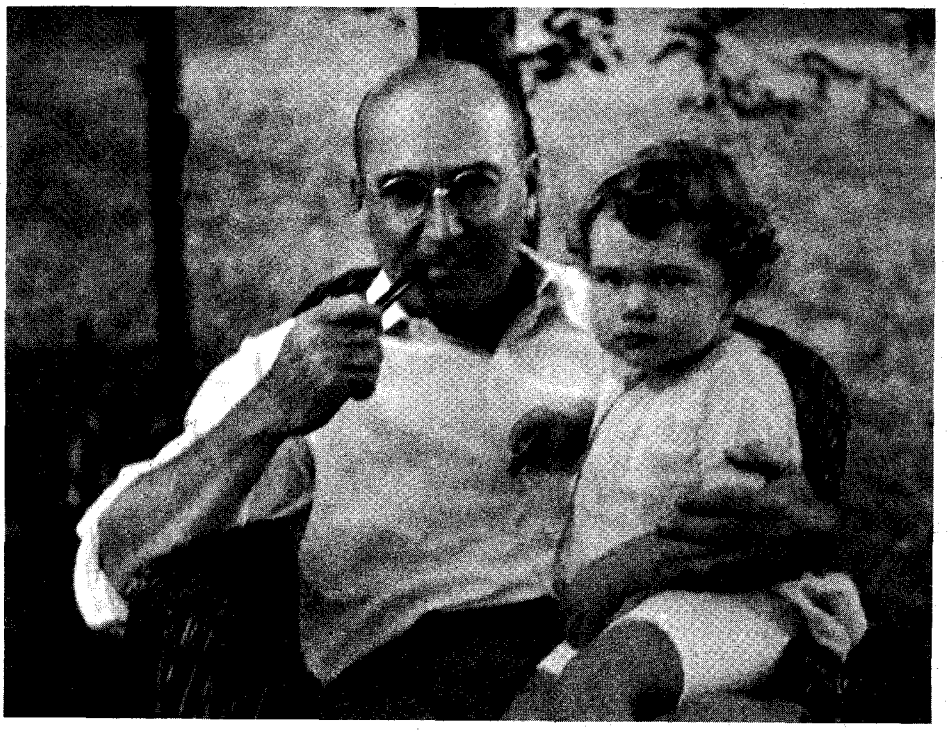
"Whether you take it or leave it," Les lowered his voice to a confidential tone, "what I'm going to tell you goes no further, understand?"

"You got my word on it. Want me to cross my heart and spit into the wind?"

"Might be a good idea at that," Les sounded serious as hell. "Maybe you've read in the newspapers about monkey glands being transplanted into humans?"

"Monkey glands. Goat glands," I agreed, a little puzzled. A recent Sunday section of the *Examiner* had devoted a full-page detailed account of the latest discovery in medical science. A boon to ageing manhood. A surgeon's answer to this fabled Fountain of Youth—still in the experimental stage, although some doctor had claimed success.

Les had pulled off the road after he'd completed his rural mail route. He killed the motor on a high bluff overlooking the Pacific Ocean, rolled a Bull Durham cigarette, and I followed suit. I remember it was one of those bleak December days with low fog blanketing the sea. It was high tide, and the booming of the surf as the breakers broke against the sandstone cliffs and caves below, had an ominous sound.



Jack B. Kelly, co-publisher of Fiction House Publications is credited with giving Coburn his biggest boost in the writing field. The little girl is the granddaughter of J. W. Glenister, Kelly's partner.

And there in that fog-bound solitude my good friend Les Zurner laid it on the line. Stripped of its excess verbage this was the gist of the proposition he outlined as confidential spokesman for the "other half" of the experiment.

A WELL KNOWN and highly reputable surgeon had been specializing in the transplanting of goat and monkey glands to humans over a period of a dozen years. In his own private clinic this M.D. had gone a step further in his scientific research. He had learned to transplant human glands with proof of benefit to the sterile recipient and no harm whatever to the donor.

Les then revealed the fact that for the past week or more I had been under critical observation and had passed the test as to physical fitness. Les Zurner had been selected to broach me on the delicate subject. Les handed me a large manila envelope saying it contained various medical articles, documented over the years regarding gland transplants. The large envelope, the kind long familiar to my gaze as containing rejected manuscripts, was indeed an ironical touch.

"The doctor guarantees that the operation won't deprive you of your manhood if you live to be a hundred," Les announced convincingly. "And you'll be paid a thousand bucks, with nobody but me and you and the doctor and the other family the wiser. You got till the day after tomorrow to think it over. In case you turn them down they'll have to find another man. You can best decide after you read the proof of this doctor's success in this field."

On the drive back I was sweating from every pore under my heavy sweater in spite of the cold bleak day, holding onto the envelope like it contained nitroglycerine, as well as my future destiny as a writer of western fiction. With a thousand-dollar grubstake I could hole up somewhere and devote all my time to writing. With a thousand bucks the deciding factor, I knew I could make the grade. It was a windfall, the answer to a writer's prayer and wishful dreams, my writing career assured. Those and other confusing thoughts milled around inside my skull on that ride back to the hotel garage on the Del Mar beach.

Day after tomorrow was the deadline, and during the long day and night hours I went through a period of anguished indecision. Sleep was hard to come by and I walked the deserted beach night and day. I'm not ashamed to admit that I prayed to God to help me make a decision during those black hours at night. The following day I received another rejected manuscript from Street & Smith that added to the gloom. Meanwhile I read and re-read the medical report.

I had given my word not to divulge the secret that now hung around my neck like the dead albatross of the Ancient Mariner, so there was no one I could confide in.

I went for a long swim around the pier that night when every star in the moonlit sky lent a faint glow to the white sands. I let the riptide carry me out in its path and it landed me about a mile north of the sandstone cliffs where Les Zurner had parked his car that morning a hundred years ago. An hour in the cold water and angling through the rip had winded me and left me chilled to the bone.

Exhausted, I lay on my back on the cold damp sand and made a promise to

(Continued on page 40)

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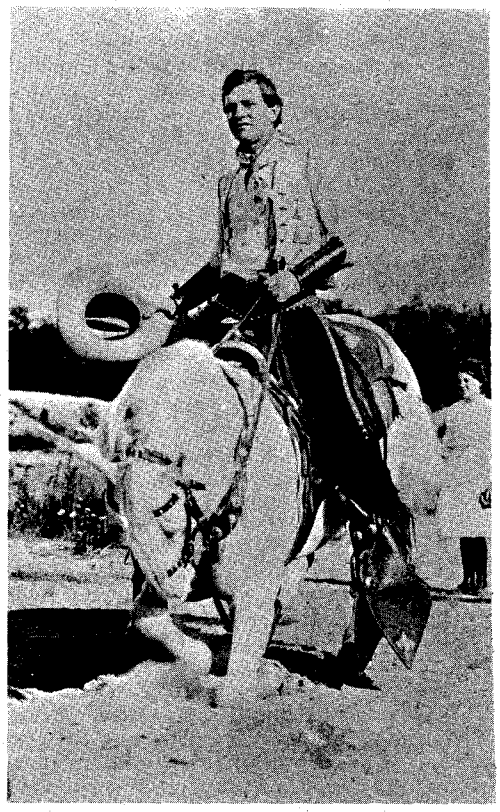
By MILT HINKLE

Photos Courtesy Author

SWASHBUCKLER Tom Mix

The man was a mirage: on the screen he was a hero nine feet tall; off the set he was a walking advertisement—for himself



Tom Mix on Joe Miller's Ben Hur at the 101 Ranch in 1909

NO MAN ever lived who more thoroughly defied psychoanalysis than Thomas Arthur Leventhau—later to be known as Tom Mix. His father was a miner of Jewish, Italian and French Canadian extraction. Elizabeth, his mother, was of gypsy descent. Tom's birthplace was not far from DuBois, Pennsylvania; his birth date about 1878 or '79.

Tom was two years old when his father died. His mother then married Ed Mix, a Greek cab driver of horses who worked for John E. DuBois in 1898.

While he was quite young, Tom got a job with the railroad as call boy. A call boy went to the railroad workers' homes and told them what time their crew was called for a run.

Tom found time to take on a good many odd jobs while living in DuBois. He spent one summer as a nursemaid to a herd of cows owned by the proprietor of the general store. He had jobs in several of the lumber camps in that part of the Keystone State. He carried water for the lumberjacks and worked in the stables.

Tom loved horses and horses loved him. Many times he was known to have been extremely cruel to human beings but never to a horse. Ed Mix had done a good job in teaching his son the technique of horse training. He was an expert trainer before he was sixteen.

Tom attended high school, which was considered advanced education in those days. One of his classmates, Arthur Weber, recalls that Tom's attendance was irregular. It seems he preferred playing cowboy, hunting and riding. Weber further stated that Tom was quiet and shy, not at the time interested in girls, and that he had very few intimate friends during his school days. (This mountain boy's personality underwent a great change in later years. He came to crave the spotlight of public attention, and women were his greatest weakness.)

WHEN Tom Mix reached the age of seventeen, he decided that he was a grown man. He was almost six feet tall, weighed 180 pounds, and his muscles were fully developed by the manual labor he had performed and the clean mountain air he had breathed. He was not doing so well as a scholar, so his father decided he should learn a trade.

The elder Mix secured a job for Tom in the Gould Coupler Works at DePew, New York, with the hope that young Tom would learn the moulder's trade. According to DuBois legend, Tom had stolen a horse and had to leave town to avoid arrest. However, Arthur Weber states there is no basis for the tale. Earl F. Mix, a cousin of Tom who grew up with him, confirms that such a thing never happened.

Tom detested the heat and grime of the foundry; however, he did find diversion in DePew. Football was becoming popular and the foundry workers had an organized team. Tom played end, later switching to the backfield.

He began immediately to save money toward the purchase of a bicycle and as soon as he obtained one, began peddling it on the highway between DePew and nearby Buffalo, where bicycle races were held every Sunday.

Tom began to lay off too much from work and was discharged from the foundry. He was broke and had no alternative other than to return to DuBois, although he knew it would be too tame for him.

When he was about twenty years old, he left DuBois as a roustabout with the Moore Brothers Road Circus. It was at this time, he got the circus bug in his veins.

After leaving the show Tom drifted freights. For a while he worked on the railroad as a gandy dancer; other times he tended bar.

Tom at one time was foreman of a stove foundry at South Pittsburg, Tennessee, and at another time was deputy sheriff of Marion County, Tennessee.

Landing in Bartlesville, Oklahoma, in 1902 he got a job as section foreman on the railroad. He then worked at Dewey, Oklahoma, and later became a dude wrangler for the 101 Ranch at Bliss.

During the Boer War he made a trip with a boatload of mules to South Africa, but was not allowed to go ashore. That Tom ever took part in the Boxer Rebellion or was with Roosevelt's Rough Riders is very doubtful from what I have learned.

He did serve from 1906 to 1909 in a troop of the 5th Cavalry. But he saw no action whatsoever in World War I. Mix was never an active Texas Ranger, but was made an honorary member after he became famous.

In 1910 he worked in his first movie at old Riverside Park in Chicago, where the Sealy Polyscope Picture Company was making a film called "The Millionaire Cowboy." Tom, being better looking than the rest, got the lead. W. A. Dickey furnished all the stock and most all the performers. And so began a life of ad-

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venture by one who achieved world-wide publicity. None of Tom's close associates ever gave him credit for being much of a roper or bronc rider, but he found the groove in which he belonged in pictures, and no one can deny that he did well in that field.

In 1911 and 1912 Tom was chief of the cowboys for the Young Buffalo Ranch Wild West Show owned by Vernon Seavers. It folded in Buffalo, New York. Meanwhile, W. A. Dickey's Circle D Ranch Show was playing in Montreal. Dickey needed stock and performers, so he sent a man (I believe it was Johnnie Mullens) to hire Billie Binder and his wife Tiny (and their great bucking horses), Texas Jack Lewis and his wife, and Tom Mix and his wife, Ollie.

The stock and performers arrived in Montreal about June 22. Pat Long and I were the bulldoggers. I also rode bucking steers and horses and worked in most of the acts in the show.

Tom wanted to take over the show and when he couldn't, he spent most of his time at the long bar near the Wild West arena. Lew Walker had his diving girls' show in the park. Iona Owens, one of the featured girls, and Fred Beason, a steer roper, got engaged. One day Iona asked me to ask Fred to return a ring she had given him. Fred got mad, which he should not have done, for I took care of him. Then Tom Mix took it up, hitting me behind my left ear, nearly knocking the daylights out of me. Of course, it was with his six-gun.

Now he shouldn't have done that, for I worked him over in a bad way. He said he would get even with me and said the park and Montreal were not big enough for us both. The next day he walked out of the park and took a train for Texas, where he got a job with Lum Clark's Circle C Ranch Wild West Show. Later that year, he left Clark and joined the Sealy Picture Company. From that time on Tom Mix was a great western actor.

TOM was married five times, first to Grace Allen, on July 18, 1902, next to Jewell Perrise, then Olive Stokes, who bore him a daughter named Ruth. Olive was followed by Vickie Ford, who bore his daughter Thomasina. At the time of his accidental death in Arizona on October 12, 1940, Tom was married to Mable Ward.

Tom Mix made a lot of money in his lifetime, but he lived high. His entire estate was only valued at $150,000 at the time of his death—$90,000 of which was claimed as back alimony.

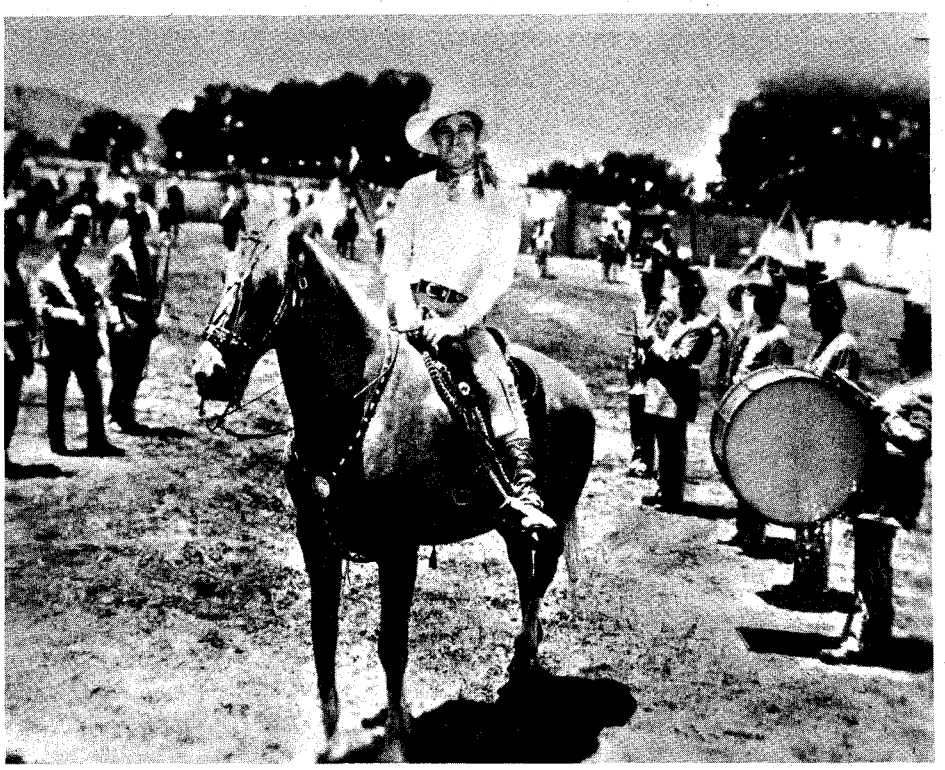
There were four great cowboy stars in those days: Tom, Hoot Gibson, Art Acord and Buck Jones. Tom was the greatest showman of the bunch. He lived his part twenty-four hours a day. Tom drove a long convertible with his name all over it and steer horns on the radiator cap. He carried thirty cowboys on the payroll. There was a saying that "Tom's hat could never blow off his head and hit the ground. Some yesman would catch it first."

He was never without his platinum belt buckle, with his initials set in diamonds. When he built his first home in Beverly Hills, he called it his "million dollar bunkhouse." His initials in lights were installed on both gates. When he went out for an evening he wore white evening dress or a purple tuxedo, depending on his mood.

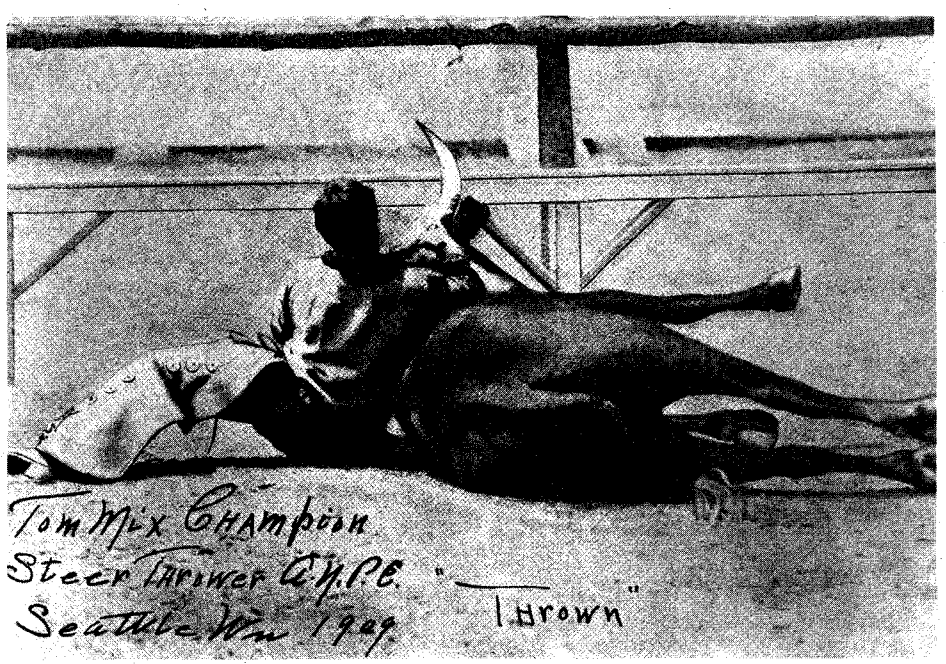
But on the screen he was the shyest, toughest, gentlest, hardest, most loyal, bravest and finest gentleman the Old West had ever known. It was Tom himself who decided he must never smoke on screen.

I have personally seen Tom Mix in action many times and can testify that his roping was as good or better than most of the old-time ropers. And I say he had more guts than anybody. He never asked a man to do what he would not do himself and, as a result, was often laid up. Directors of other Western pictures got their riders killed or crippled trying to equal the rugged action that made Tom Mix famous.

A strange man, this Tom Mix—sometimes drunk—but a damn good showman. One thing—he never came on the set



Above, Tom Mix posed for this publicity shot on a movie lot in 1931. Below, Mix proved his ability to perform his own hazardous stunts in movies by winning the steer throwing contest at Seattle, 1909.



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when he was drinking. His pictures were as clean and colorful as his personal life was sordid. He was ruthless in his rapid climb to the top, as a man must be to succeed as he did.

A LOT of writers and others have criticized the late Tom Mix. I'd like to say that, with the exception of Buffalo Bill Cody, Tom Mix was the greatest showman of all time.

Louella Parsons, famous Hollywood columnist and friend of movie stars, once said of Mix, "There's never been a character like Tom, who had his name in huge letters on his house, his car blazoned with big initials. I remember so well a party he gave in my honor. I still have photographs from it. I was the only woman there and he had a throne set up for me and did I love it!"

It seems to be human nature to want to throw stones at the guy on top of the ladder, even if he happens to be long dead. I will admit that I never cared much for Tom Mix; he was a hard man to understand and had a way of keeping you at a distance. But I believe in giving the Devil his due, and if some of the stories about Tom keep on getting bigger and better, it is apt to reflect on the integrity of the F.B.I. for letting such a character run at large so long.

I don't care if Tom Mix was ever a range cowboy or not. Personally, I doubt that he ever was, but it certainly was no handicap to him in his climb to fame as a movie star. In my book, you just can't be yellow through and through and have a lot of guts too. Tom Mix certainly had guts, at least when it came to doing stunts. He never used a double for them.

In Chicago, so 'tis said, Mr. William (Colonel) Selig spied Tom Mix at the stock yards with a trainload of cattle and signed him up for movie work. Mr. Selig had a studio there and was already making movies, but Los Angeles was the potential spot for movie making in the future. Tom came to Los Angeles. But I've always doubted that Tom was just in with a trainload of cattle when Mr. Selig signed him for pictures.

My guess is it was a publicity stunt to create the illusion that Tom was fresh from the wide open spaces—a real hand. I worked with Tom for more than a year and I know he had nerve—the real thing—and I've many times seen him scorn the suggestion of a double for him or a "fake take," saying "If I can't do it, it can't be done."

As a showman he was tops, and he wasn't a green hand when he signed with Colonel Selig. He had been a star in shows for some time before that. Somehow the publicity story doesn't fit in with the Tom Mix I know.

They went to Arizona on location as a company, and Tom wrote, directed and played the leading role. His wife, Olive, and Ruth, their baby daughter, were then with him, and Olive was a pretty dark-eyed woman of good figure and appealing smile. She was what is known as a "regular fellow" and got along well.

Tom had charge of horses and animals for Selig and substituted for the "hero" for the more dangerous riding stunts, but soon he was taking the lead parts himself.

Later he joined Fox Films, and from that day on he became the greatest Western hero of them all. He and his wonder horse, Tony, earned every nickel of the $5,000,000 they made in the movies. In 370 films, Tom never used a stand-in for a death-defying stunt.

There is a lot to be said about Mix. He was rated the best screen cowboy since Wm. S. Hart. Mix was more rugged than Hart. The stunts Mix did overshadow Hart by a great margin.

Tom lived to alternate movie making with circuses and Wild West shows. His long-ago employer, Colonel Zack T. Miller, alleged that Tom had signed with him for the 1929 season. However, when the season began, the star and Tony were at the head of the Sells-Floto Circus parade. His salary was reputedly $12,000 a week. Colonel Miller immediately sued. In Erie, Pennsylvania, he was awarded $90,000 for breach of contract.

The suit touched off a series of court appearances that seemed to set a pattern for Tom Mix's remaining years. He was on display in one court or another for the rest of his life.

At this point one of his daughters eloped. Tom immediately stopped the payments of $225 a month he had made toward her support. She sued, but Tom won.

It was only the beginning. Tom barely had time for a quick change before a surgeon sued him for $9,700. The doctor had removed Mix's appendix, a chore for which he billed the cowboy $10,000. Tom sent him a check for $300 claiming that the doctor had not performed the operation but that it had been done by an assistant. Since Mix was under an anesthetic at the time, his testimony was open to debate. The court allowed the doctor $1,300.

Mix was able to get out of Los Angeles shortly thereafter with no process servers following him. Back with the circus once more, he and Tony began a series of stands along the eastern seaboard. In Portsmouth, New Hampshire, Mix called police to his private railroad car to report the theft of $75,000 in cash and a collection of diamonds he valued at $125,000. They immediately arrested his valet. Several days later, after patient police work, another man was arrested, and confessed to the crime. He was sentenced to from one to two years, and the valet who had been released, immediately sued Tom Mix for slander and defamation of character.

Colonel Miller, meanwhile, was suing Tom for libel in Mississippi. His second wife's suit was still to come. Bitter at the world which had suddenly dropped him from its shoulders and now seemed to take delight in kicking him at every turn of the road, Tom Mix finished the tour and took Tony to Mixville in Arizona. There, at last, he was among those he knew and understood, and who understood him. He had given the two California homes to his second wife. At his ranch he saw his attorney and friend, Ralph W. Smith, and his daughter Thomasina.

Soon after, he disappeared from public view. A new generation of moviegoers had grown up and a new group of heroes had succeeded Tom Mix. His old fans had sons, and the sons had their own idols—talking, singing, handsome cowboys.

Then, on October 12, 1940 the familiar face appeared on the front pages again, for the last time. Tom Mix was dead. He had been killed when his car went out of control and turned over near Florence, Arizona. He was traveling alone. The coroner said he had been killed instantly. He was sixty years old. In his pockets was $6,000 in cash and $1,500 in traveler's checks, and several thousand dollars worth of his beloved diamonds. There wasn't a yesman within miles of the scene.

They buried him in a silver casket, with his name stamped big and bold in the sterling. They buried him in Hollywood, at Forest Lawn Memorial Park. Many of the stars of the silent days of movies attended.

Personally, I both hated and admired Tom Mix—but God knows I never understood him. I have only tried to describe the man as I knew him, and I offer this description with all due respect to a great showman.

In 1931, Tom Mix was with the Sells-Floto Circus.

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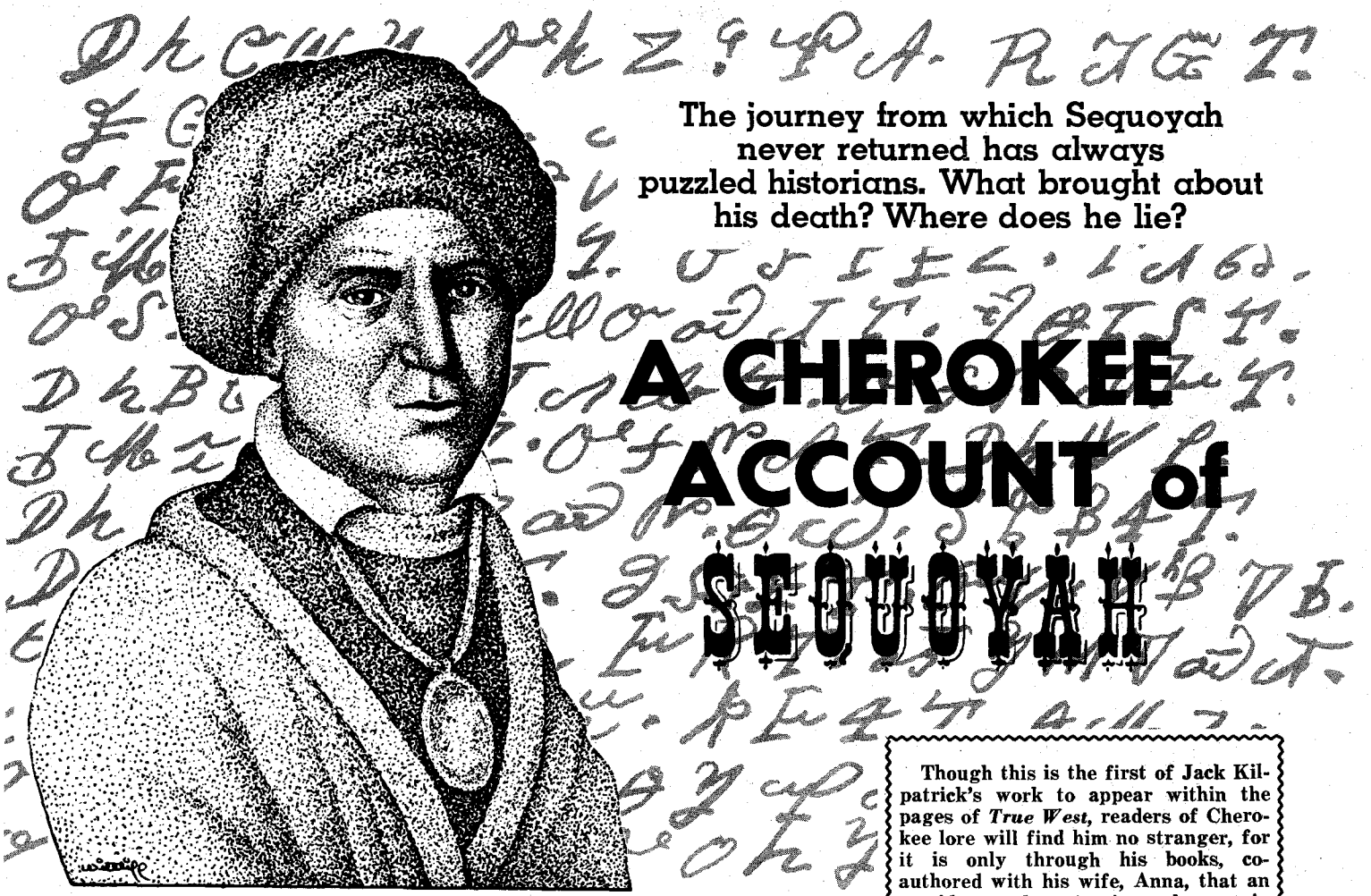

The journey from which Sequoyah never returned has always puzzled historians. What brought about his death? Where does he lie?

A CHEROKEE ACCOUNT of SEQUOYAH

By JACK F. KILPATRICK

Illustration by William D. Wittliff

THE CHEROKEES treasure up a large body of oral tradition concerning Sequoyah, their most illustrious historical figure. At one time there probably existed numerous written accounts of the man who singlehandedly made the Cherokees a literate people. But today the use of the ingenious orthographic system that Sequoyah introduced in 1821 verges upon extinction, and surprisingly little manuscript material written in it has survived.

It is therefore worthy of note that a few years ago, in the vicinity of Tenkiller Lake in eastern Oklahoma, there turned up a short account, penned in the Sequoyah syllabary, of an oral tradition concerning the trip through Texas, begun in the summer of 1842, from which the Indian savant never returned. It is generally accepted that he died in Mexico in August of 1843. Its chief interest stems from its variance from the documented version of Sequoyah's visionary expedition. It adds almost nothing to what we know of the passing from history of the greatest of all Indians, but it sheds additional light upon what his people believe, or choose to believe about a man they refuse to forget.

The translation of the document, fittingly by Anna Gritts Kilpatrick, a lineal descendant of Sequoyah, begins:

"The Cherokees long ago told that which I am going to write. *Ugewaleda* was the name of the brother of Sequoyah."

We point out here that historians appear never to have discovered something which every Cherokee traditionalist knows—that *Ugewaleda* was the "Chief Dutch" or "Tahchee" who was the model for one of George Catlin's most inspired portrait studies.

The narrative continues:

"Sequoyah wanted to go to the west in order to have a look at where the other Indians lived. When he went to go see about this he chose two good men.

" 'We are going to go to the west. We will be back soon,' stated Sequoyah.

"Then they left."

The purpose of the trip was a mystical desire of Sequoyah to find a colony of Cherokees reputed to be living near San Fernando, in Mexico. The party originally consisted of nine men, but six of them were sent back to the Cherokee Nation after the expedition had traversed a part of Texas. The two young men who continued on with Sequoyah were Teesee *(Dhisi)*, Sequoyah's son, and Worm *(Utsiya)*, who upon his return supplied to his national newspaper, *The Cherokee Advocate* in Tahlequah, an account of his adventures.

The remainder of the Tenkiller Lake Manuscript dissonates sharply with Worm's report, the canonical version of what happened:

"They were upon horseback when they

(Continued on page 62)

Though this is the first of Jack Kilpatrick's work to appear within the pages of *True West*, readers of Cherokee lore will find him no stranger, for it is only through his books, co-authored with his wife, Anna, that an outsider can hope to pierce the curtain which always seems to separate the races, and approach an understanding of the kind, deeply poetic and highly civilized Cherokee people. On February 22, 1967, Jack Kilpatrick died; he had lived fifty-one years, Cherokee in body and in spirit.

His profession was that of composer and teacher of music theory; he had written more than 170 musical compositions, including 8 symphonies. All were touched by that particular plot of earth into which his roots were deeply embedded. Not so long before his death he wrote me:

"I have been a composer and music critic and a writer of sorts, and to me all these things have been the same. I think the burden of my song has been this immemorial land, lying long in the sun—not Indians, not the United States—something that was, and is, and will always be set apart, unique, the incredible and precious creation of geology, the only home of Ancient Spirits."

Though his profession was one usually regarded as overly pedantic, Jack remained solidly human. Once he was telling two of us of his wife's distinguished ancestry, while we were constantly pressuring him to relate facts of his own background. It took some pressuring, and at last he replied, "Oh me? I'm just poor *red* trash."

The Cherokees have lost a brother; you and I, a friend.

—William D. Wittliff

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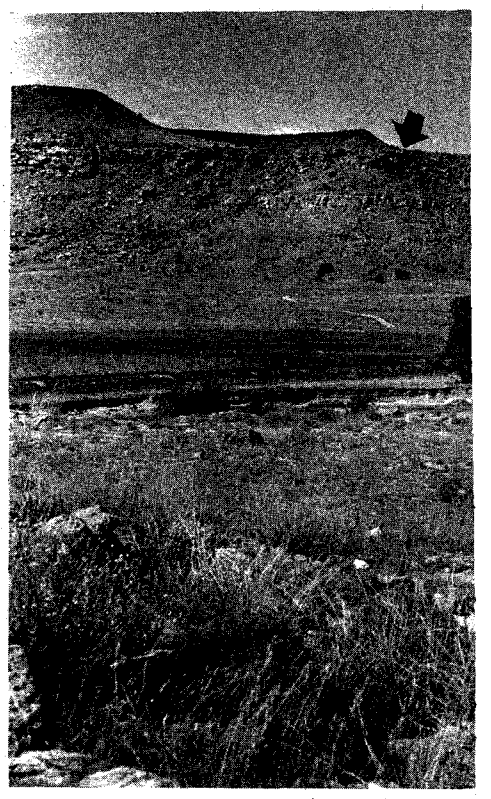
By C. L. PACKER

Photos Courtesy Author



At the beginning men kept themselves busy trying to stock the place with loot. Today men are keeping themselves busy trying to carry it off! (See page 17)

COE'S CASTLE on the CARRIZO—1867

"RIDERS!" The shout caused chain reaction. Three men leaped for their guns, leaving the big wheel hanging askew on the freshly greased axle. Two muleskinners and a teen-age boy ran for their weapons and ducked behind a wagon. The woman who had given the warning seized a musket and joined her sister who held a muzzle-loader as she crouched alongside the men. In one of the wagons a young mother clutched her small daughters as they hid under some bedding.

A band of some twenty outlaws came thundering down-slope to within fifty yards of the two Conestogas. The leader, handsome and well dressed, raised an arm in truce and rode cautiously forward until a muleskinner shouted, "Stay whar yuh be!"

Moving up within earshot, the horseman shouted, "We want your valuables, some food and your guns! If you shoot me, my men will butcher all of you! Lay down your arms and line up out here in the open! Do as I say and none of you will get hurt, and you can keep your livestock!"

One of the women shouted, "How do we know you'll not harm us?"

Flashing a white-toothed smile the outlaw answered, "Lady, we don't want to kill any women! And Captain Coe keeps his word!"

The muleskinner looked at his companions. "We ain't got a chance in a fight against that bunch." The others agreed. The men walked out and laid down their arms.

"Good! Anybody in those wagons?" yelled Coe.

One of the women called, "Come on down, Laura!" The frightened mother and her little girls climbed down from the wagon and took their places beside the others.

Coe signaled his men and joined them as they galloped by. It was a sinister looking lot reining up in front of the little party, except for the leader. He seemed to be a man of breeding. His lithe 6-feet-2, 175-pound frame sat his horse easily, as his dark eyes studied the situation.

Even white teeth showed in a reassuring smile as he glanced at the nervous young mother. "Young lady," he said "you and the others have nothing to fear from us as long as you try no tricks." Then his eyes tightened a bit as they slowly moved along and rested briefly on each man's face. Coe wasn't smiling now. His rifle rested across the saddle, right in front of the most conspicious item of his apparel—a large belt buckle of gleaming silver.

"My men are going through your wagons now. Whether you reach Independence or not depends on your actions during the next few minutes." Coe's eyes suddenly fixed upon the youngster whose spunky stare had never left the outlaw leader's face. "Son, I'd like for you to live to be a fine man with a nice home and family someday. I would think about that if I were you!" This warning had the desired effect on the boy.

The Captain and three of his men sat their horses with ready rifles while the rest of the band gathered up the guns and ransacked the wagons.

The search was not too rewarding, but a small quantity of gold bullion brightened the eyes of the bandit chief. A wagoner protested their taking this since he was duty bound to deliver it in Independence, Missouri. Coe squelched him with "Mister, gold is the one thing we want most! Besides—you're trading it for your hide!"

The loot was apportioned to the men and loaded on all the horses except Coe's. He seemed to prefer to be unburdened—even by gold. When everything was ready, the outlaws fanned out in all directions. The bandit chief was last to leave. He stood in his stirrups, removed his hat with a courtly flourish, flashed that disarming smile at the ladies and raked spurs across his horse. As the animal sprang to a gallop Coe turned in his saddle, waved his hat again and shouted, "Remember, Captain Coe always keeps his word!"

AFTER riding out of sight of their victims, the bandits followed their usual pattern of converging on their hangout—Robbers' Roost.

The "Roost" was a 16x35-foot rock stronghold with walls 30 inches thick. On its north side, which faced Black Mesa, was a door. Another door was on the south side. At each end of the fort was a big rock chimney—outlets to huge fireplaces which kept the place warm during the long cold winters.

The fort was windowless, but twenty-seven loopholes supplied ventilation and offered a means of defense in case the outlaws were ever forced to a showdown there. So far that had not happened.

Irate settlers and ranchers in No

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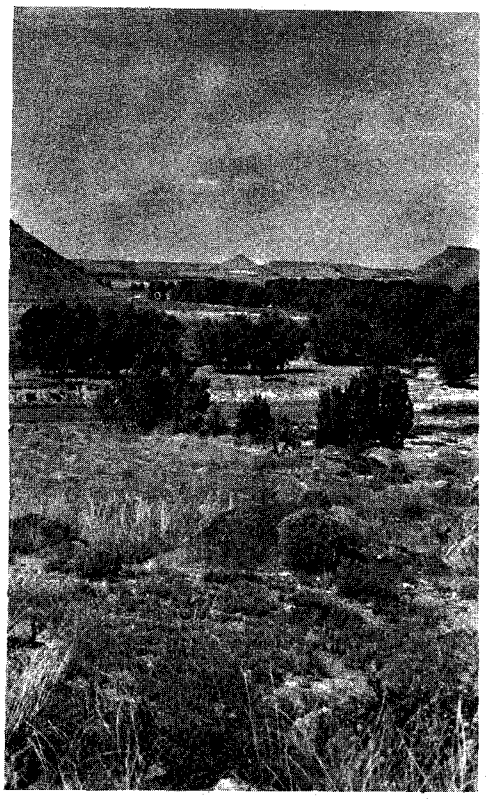


Black Mesa, in western tip of the Oklahoma Panhandle, looking from the location of Coe's hideout. The cannon which finally destroyed the Robbers' Roost was fired from the top of the mesa (arrow). Carrizo Creek is visible in the middleground.

Man's Land, the Texas Panhandle, New Mexico, Colorado and Kansas had met on different occasions to discuss means of ridding the country of the Roost Gang which raided their herds and drove the stock to buyers as far away as Wyoming. But the heated discussions came to a dead end when the possibility of having to attack the rock fort came up. They always reached the unanimous opinion that it was impregnable. So the ranchers and farmers sat tight, bore their losses and hoped something would happen to the gang. For a time, however, all that happened was more grief to settlers and the caravans.

Just when William Coe first came to the Black Mesa region nobody seems to know for sure. Conjecture puts it around 1864. If that date is correct, then one tale as to what caused him to turn outlaw is incorrect—the one that pictures him as a soldier who served the South loyally till the end of the war, then returned to his farm in Texas, only to find it grown up to weeds and all his livestock gone. Disheartened at this turn of events, the Captain had decided there must be some easier way to exist and headed into No Man's Land where he organized his band of raiders.

Another story says Coe came up the trail with a bunch of Charlie Goodnight's hands and then drifted east into No Man's Land. But this account doesn't seem to jibe with the incident which occurred when Coe and Goodnight met one day and did not recognize each other, although Coe had sworn he would kill Goodnight on sight.

The bandit made this threat because some of Goodnight's men who had joined the Roost gang were fired by the rancher when one of them remarked that he might have easier pickings if he were with the outlaws. So if Coe had once been one of Goodnight's men there certainly would have been recognition and likely a killing when they met each other that day, because Charlie Goodnight was no coward and, to quote from one of the cattleman's most trusted men, John Rumans, "Coe was a nice-looking fellow, but he sure was a son-of-a-gun and not afraid of the devil himself!" And Rumans knew the outlaw quite well.

Still another account says Coe was the black sheep of a fine old Southern family. He *was* a Captain, but deserted and took refuge in No Man's Land. So if he landed there about 1864, which was before the war was over, this tale seems to be correct. In that case, deserter or not, the man had plenty of guts as subsequent events demonstrated.

The gang he controlled with an iron hand was one of the roughest aggregations of its kind that ever harassed the Old West. And conflicting descriptions as to its leader's character make it difficult to separate fact from fable.

On one side of the ledger we see him as a merciless cutthroat—an absolutely no-good individual, who murdered, gambled, cheated, and chased women. On the other side he is pictured as a sort of "Prairie Robin Hood," a loyal friend, but a deadly enemy; a gambler, yes—but no cheat. At times he was very merciful, even kind. The man had a unique sense of humor, did like the girls—but liked gambling and gold far more. So maybe Coe had a kind of Jekyll-Hyde complex. At least all the legends agree on one point—the man was a born leader. His men had a wholesome respect for the accuracy of his ever-present .44 percussion Colt and his Henry repeating rifle.

Bill saw to it that his gang never wanted for entertainment at the Roost. A bar had been installed and a piano brought in—also girls from various towns, and some señoritas from away down in Old Mexico. Coe and his boys lived in style!

THE BLACK MESA region was already a sanctuary for outlaws and renegade Indians before Coe arrived. Because of a boundary dispute Texas had lost a narrow strip of land across the top of its Panhandle—a strip 168 miles long and 34½ miles wide.

Much of this territory was as level as a floor except for some broken country along the streams. Out at the west end, however, the Cimarron breaks tapering off from Black Mesa afforded a rugged canyon-scarred, mesa-dotted land which had become a rendezvous of renegades where gun rule reigned. This lawless country—"a maverick among states"—became known as No Man's Land.

When Coe first arrived, he got in on a few raids and decided this was the life for him. Without delay he proceeded to build up his own gang to some forty or fifty men and was soon making outlaw history in the Southwest.

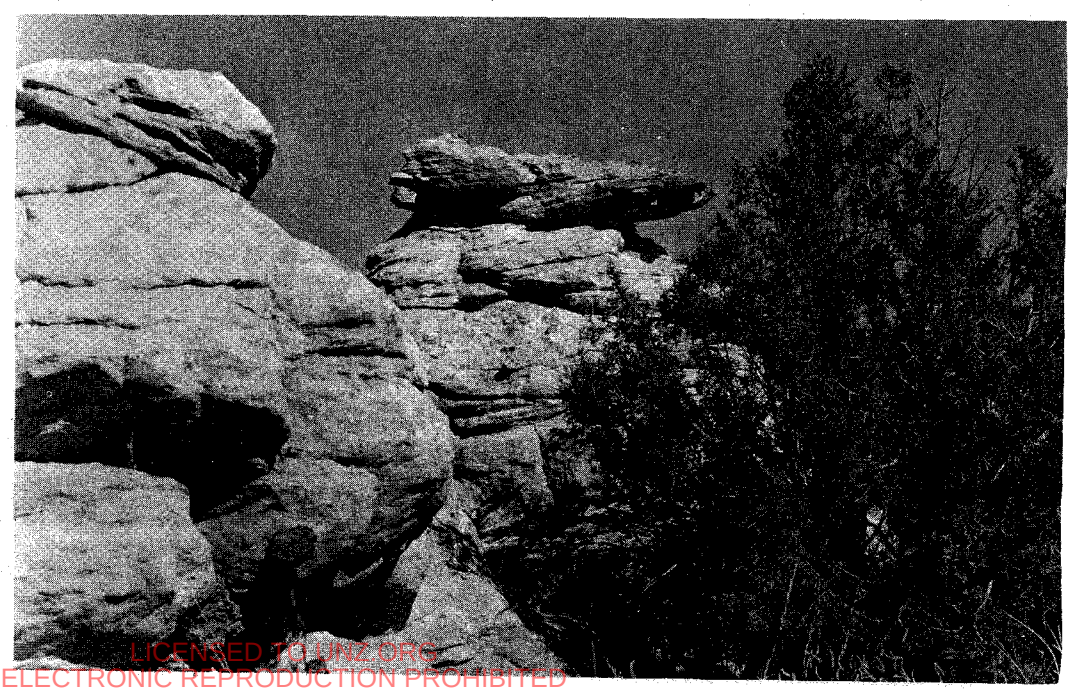
Soon the Roost Gang was dealing so much misery to caravans, ranchers, nesters, and scattered settlements that any act of violence was blamed on Coe whether his gang was guilty or not. And Coe basked in the limelight and taunted the soldiers at Fort Union and Fort Lyon.

Finally the Government sent Kit Carson into the area to select a strategic spot for a fort. Here Fort Nichols was built in June, 1865—4½ miles east of the New Mexico line and about 12 miles south of Black Mesa.

The troops began to escort caravans through the danger zone and deviltry decreased. But Nichols was abandoned in September of that same year and ruthless plundering surged anew.

At times the Coe gang seemed to dwindle to a dozen or so men at the Roost, but this was when the Boss had detailed riders to drive stolen animals to different markets. On other occasions he split the gang into two or more groups and sent them on simultaneous raids on

The bandits took refuge among the rocks of Lookout Peak to survey the area for possible victims, or posses. The rock formations shown here are on the eastern slope of the peak.



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different targets. Sometimes there was violence connected with these raids. An example was the attack on the sheepherders' camp on the Carrizo.

For years sheepmen in New Mexico had cast longing eyes toward the fine buffalo ranges bordering the Cimarron and its tributaries. In 1862, as the vast herds were beginning to be depleted and outlaw bands were adding to the woes of wagontrains along the Cimarron Cutoff, Juan Maria Baca, a wealthy sheepman, drove the first big flock into the Cimarron Valley. During the next two years he and his brother Vincente brought in more sheep until their flocks numbered about 30,000 head.

Their glowing reports to friends back home got results. In 1864, Juan and Ramon Bernal arrived at the Cimarron with 20,000 bleating woollies.

Up to now the sheepmen had been beset with few worries. Their flocks fattened on the juicy grass along the streams, and the Spaniards were happy. True, Indians stole a few of the animals now and then, and outlaws took one or two occasionally, but as one of the Bacas put it, "Why shouldn't the *bandidos* and *Indios* have some fat sheep now and then? Do we not have thousands?"

But maybe Captain Coe thought so many sheep were eating the grass he wanted for his stolen cattle and horse herds and decided it was time to throw a scare into the Spaniards.

One cold day in February, 1867, he delegated the leadership of the sheep-raiding job to one of his top men. The Captain preferred to stay in the Roost where huge fires in both fireplaces made everything cozy.

Maybe the lieutenant he had assigned to the raid thought this was his chance to make a name for himself in the Captain's absence, or maybe the herders put up too much resistance. At any rate, the outlaws stormed into camp, killed two sheepherders and drove away 3,400 sheep. If they figured the Spaniards would be too cowed to do anything about it, they were wrong.

The sheepmen took up the trail, caught the outlaws off guard, and tied them up. Why they were not killed outright nobody seems to know, but fear of what Coe's revenge might be if they killed his men is probably what spared the lives of the thieves. Leaving the bound bandits, back the Spaniards went with their sheep and the bandits' horses to the camp on the Carrizo.

Now for the first time since their move to No Man's Land the Bacas and their friends began to worry. The more they thought about the affair the greater grew their concern, so they decided to seek help from Col. William Penrose of Fort Lyon, Colo. They told the Colonel the whole story and the exact location of the outlaw hangout. Although Penrose had received previous complaints from other settlers who had been troubled by the bandits, little had been done about it.

IN THE fall of '67 Charlie Goodnight established a ranch in Colorado on the Apishapa about forty miles northeast of Trinidad. Here he kept a bunch of top hands. A few of them knew Coe personally—the others, by reputation. Colorful tales of this lusty fellow were floating around all over the country.

When the Roost gang got a hankering for a taste of town life, the Captain would accompany a bunch of them to Trinidad. On arrival they promptly swung into action and by the time they were ready to return to the Roost, the nerves of some of the more staid citizens were shot to a frazzle.

These worthy ones had appealed to Goodnight to lend a hand in taming down the wild doings since the local law was slow to assert authority. The rancher agreed it was high time the gang was chastised and said the next time they showed up, the Apishapa waddies would ride herd on the bandits.

The "next time" was not long in coming. Barely had the town got straightened up from the last mess when the Captain and fifteen of his henchmen galloped up the dusty street of Trinidad. This time it appeared they had some new deal planned, for they were leading ten extra horses.

The men tied their horses to hitch-racks and had started over to the saloon when they noticed four muleskinners heading for the same oasis to wet their whistles before starting out that morning. The teamsters were intercepted by the pistol-toting outlaws and told to move out into the street and start dancing. A grizzled middle-aged skinner spat a gob of tobacco juice on the boardwalk and gritted, "Yo' all go to hell!"

A bullet splintered a board at his feet. Cussing like a trooper, he was prodded into the street with the others where bullets spitting into the ground sent them hopping around like barefoot boys in a sandburr patch.

The cantankerous one continued to cuss and as the pace began to tell he grew so vile that a bandit got mad and threatened to blow his head off. Then Coe, who was watching it all with a benevolent smile, interfered. "You'll do nothing of the sort! That gentleman has nerve, and I like that in a man. They've had enough." He motioned to the muleskinners, "You may go now. Thank you for an outstanding performance, gentlemen!"

At this the old codger squinted hard at Coe, ejected his cud in the dust and stomped into the saloon, followed by his companions.

While all this was taking place, a crowd of curious bystanders had stood at a respectful distance around the center of entertainment. None of them laughed very loudly for fear that they might be invited to join the dancers. And though to all appearances Coe was engrossed in watching the fun, his sharp eyes never missed a movement among the onlookers.

During the excitement a Trinidad citizen had slipped out of town on horseback, heading for the Apishapa. As the dance ended, a cowboy sidled up to Coe and told him of this. The Captain thanked him and did some quick calculating. His gang was in town for the purpose of blowing off steam and he didn't want them to be disappointed. He figured they could have about eight hours of hell-raising before Goodnight's boys came charging into town.

Two of the gang had followed the muleskinners into the saloon. In a few minutes three fiddlers were prodded through the door and into the street where they were made to duplicate the dance of the muleskinners. And these four characters were now standing on the sideline guffawing at the plight of the musicians.

The air around the dancers was filled with dust and powder smoke as the whooping outlaws punctuated the dance steps with bullets. Coe was smiling again as he watched the ludicrous antics but called a halt as the dancers began to show signs of fatigue.

Now the Roost gang clamored into the saloon and took over. While his men were having a high old time with the girls, Coe sat in on a poker game. The Henry rifle lay across his lap, and his

(Continued on page 50)

The rock foundation of the Robbers' Roost is visible here, with the western end of Black Mesa in the background, which is in New Mexico.

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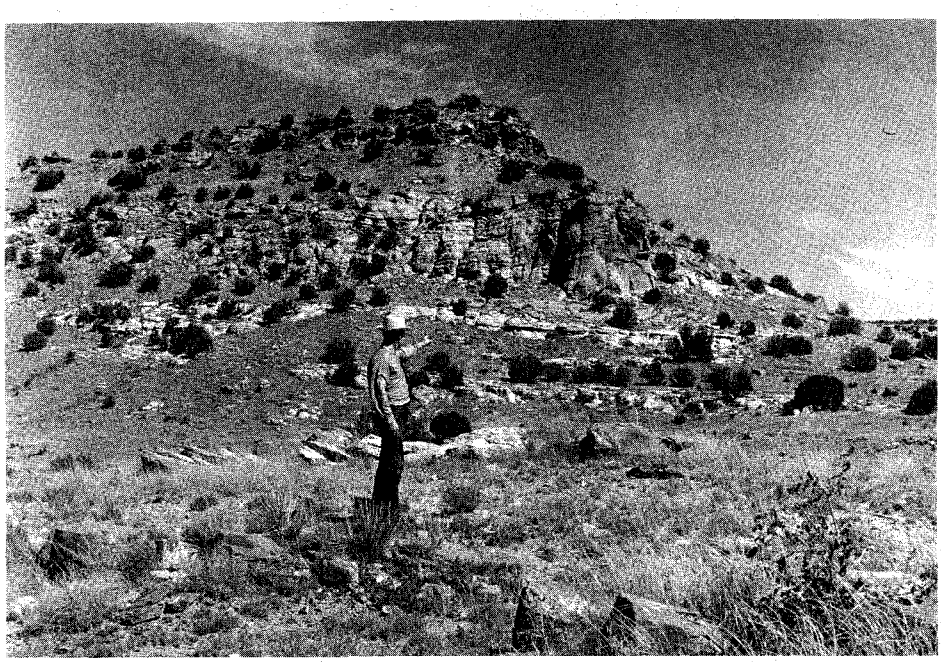

Courtesy C. L. Packer

The author points toward Lookout Peak, used by the bandits for surveillance of the area.

COE'S CASTLE on the CARRIZO—1967

By IKE OSTEEN

THE "COE GANG" country near Kenton, Oklahoma, is still unspoiled nature at its best. Most of it has never felt a plow. It is just as the Indians saw it when they stood on the rimrocks and gazed down on the buffalo watering in the waters of Carrizo Creek and the Cimarron River.

These two streams join at this point. Woe be unto the unwary person or animal caught at flood time in the swift current of the "Crease," a local term for the Carrizo, or the mucky quicksand of the treacherous Cimarron.

The buffalo and Indians are gone, but much evidence of their having been there is still apparent. The deer, antelope, coons, badgers, skunks, a few 'possums and an occasional bear are not uncommon sights to the natives. This, with about every kind of bird on the North American Continent, and the magnificent sunsets and sunrises, inspire a man to pick up his old gun and say, "This I will defend to the death."

Just back of the outlaws' fort is Lookout Peak. From this round, rocky hill the Coe Gang sentinel could see anyone or anything approaching from any direction in ample time to give a warning.

When the settlers finally prevailed upon the army to go "get 'em", the army tried it with just men and rifles. But the stronghold could not be taken in that manner. Not until a cannon was set up on the edge of the mesa across the creek was the gang's rock fort knocked to pieces. The outlaws scattered but all were killed or eventually captured. Thus the legend of buried treasure at Robbers' Roost came into being. People have been looking and digging since that bloody day.

IN 1920, the present owner of the land at Robbers' Roost came on the scene. He was Elzy Tanner, fresh from the oil fields of Slick, Oklahoma. He says anyone who was rugged enough to survive the oil fields, could stand about anything, and he was willing to bet Uncle Sam three years of his life that he could make a living on 160 acres.

Elzy had the usual equipment of the average homesteader or "nester," as they were called at that time. Two items he brought with him, and which he still has and uses, are a 30.06 rifle and a big old heavy .45 six-shooter. Elzy says he had hardly set foot on his place when he had to run people off, and has been having to do it ever since.

In his words, "The first callers came while I was digging the hole for my first corner post. Three cowmen, or a cowman and his two sons, rode up and asked me what I was doing. I told them I was building a fence and they told me not to bother with building it too good cause their cows would just tear it down anyway.

"I told them if their cows got in my field, I would sure as hell kill them. They said I wouldn't be in the country very long. I told them that we had just as well get things straight to start with and if I left the country, it would be in a pine box. They told me about one nester who didn't leave."

Elzy pointed some 200 yards to the south of his house and said, "His grave is right out there."

Elzy said, "I told them that if they wanted to shoot me they had better not miss their first shot, cause the next one would be mine and I don't miss what I shoot at." He said he pointed to the old .45 a few feet away where he had placed it when he started digging the post hole. The cowmen must have read his message loud and clear because they rode away and didn't bother him anymore.

Elzy explained that, down through the years, people have come from near and far with all kinds of Mexican dip needles, divining rods, water witching sticks, and even maps to try to find the outlaws' treasure. He said one person who had gone to a fortune teller, or had paid for a seance, had been told exactly where to explore. At first Elzy allowed one and all to search and dig, but when they started leaving all the holes open and his gates as well, he became in his wife's words "a little cantankerous and hard to get along with insofar as treasure hunters were concerned."

Finally Elzy posted his land with "No

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Courtesy Author

Elzy Tanner, owner of the area, stands among the rocks of Lookout Peak, from which he watched trespassers attempting to carry off petrified wood.

Trespassing" signs, and tried charging 50c per person to let them on the property. He also told them "no digging" because one of his cows had broken a leg in a treasure hunter's unfilled pit. Some prospectors would pay the 50c and, after looking the place over, would leave and sneak back after dark to do their digging.

ELZY found several large petrified logs on his place and has carried many of the smaller pieces into his yard. These he used to build the porch on the house he and his wife are living in now. His first "homestead shack," as he calls it, is still standing in good repair not far from their present home. Elzy also found dinosaur legs and backbone. A piece of a leg is in his front yard at this time. A dinosaur quarry is not too many miles away and many bones from this location are in museums.

With a twinkle in his eyes and a big smile, Elzy told me of one party of four men who came and were refused permission to hunt. They got into their car and left his yard, fording the creek which is the only means of getting to his place. Driving around the hill, they parked their car and walked back. Of course, from Lookout Peak it is as impossible to approach today without being seen as it was in the days of the Coe Gang.

Elzy buckled on his old .45 and hid among the fortress-like rock formations to see what they were going to do. He did not have long to wait. In a short time they started back toward their car with their arms full of the petrified wood.

Elzy stepped out and asked them, "What are you going to do with all that petrified wood?"

"I guess we are going to put it down," said one of the four.

"You are too late for that now, and it will cost you 25c per pound for all you have."

"Why, that's out of reason and we won't pay it."

"Well, you know all I have to do is call the sheriff and it will cost you guys a devil of a lot more than that. Take your choice, but you are not leaving my place until you settle one way or the other."

The four thought it over and, looking at Elzy, they knew he was going to do just what he said.

"Well, where is your scale?" they asked him.

"I don't have any but we can guess it off," and that is just what they did.

One man said, "I don't know what I'm going to do because I don't have enough money to pay for what I have."

Elzy said that the other three finally dug up enough to bail their buddy out, and that bunch has not been back to bother him again.

Generally when he tells people they can't come in they respect his order and go on. About four years ago, however, when the new crop of treasure hunters started showing up with modern metal locators he had quite a time for awhile. He said they got so bad, and so many "rockhounds" started carrying off anything they could get away with, that he finally refused to let any of them in.

He had one pair in a pick-up truck who was going to look whether he wanted them to or not. He ran them off and told them not to come back. A day or two later quite a hard rain fell in the area and Carrizo Creek, which you can normally ford, was running bank-full. Elzy could not get out; neither could anyone get in.

He happened to look across the creek and there were these two treasure hunters and their pick-up in his alfalfa field. One of the men was not far from the pick-up and the other was quite some distance away near a fence.

Elzy hollered and told them they had better leave because he had meant what he said when he told them not to come back. They just waved and laughed and went on searching. Elzy said there was no way he could cross the creek, but he knew his old rifle could.

He went to the house and got the rifle and walked back to the creek bank. The man near the fence had his hand on a post and Elzy said, "I started to shoot his hand off, then decided that being close to seventy-five years old, I just might not be the shot I used to be, and I didn't want to kill him, so I just "planted" one close to his feet. He went about four feet high and came down running. The other man near the pick-up hollered at me and I put the next shot through the pick-up door. I said above the roar of the running creek, 'You dirty sneaking cowards, better get the hell out of here or my next one will be through the block.'

"Well, they got and I haven't seen them back since."

I SPENT a little time in the comfortable Tanner home, looking at the nice collection of Indian arrowheads, drills, stunners, scrapers, and other artifacts Elzy and his wife have picked up over the years. I am not a rockhound, but I had to marvel at the lovely polished rock jewelry, and the many unusual rock formations which decorate their home inside and out. And you have only to be around when the grandchildren show up for a visit, as they did before I left, to know that underneath the stern exterior Elzy wears for treasure hunters and rockhounds, there is a kind and gentle human being.

If I have brought home to the few "rotten apples" in the treasure hunting barrel what their stupid disregard for the property of others is doing to alienate land owners against ALL treasure hunters, rockhounds, and game hunters—then I am happy.

All you need to do is GET PERMISSION! If you find a gate open, LEAVE IT OPEN. If you find a gate shut, LEAVE IT SHUT. Do your target practice on the rifle range or into a creek bank and not in some rancher's pasture or into a mailbox. If you have an agreement with the land owner on his part of whatever you find, keep your agreement, because 99 out of 100 ranch and farm folks will keep theirs.

And—most important of all—nobody has ever found much treasure in the smoking end of a gun barrel.

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Too bad it wasn't mannerly to inquire into a man's past.

This one would have made a good story . . .

JOHNNIE MATHESON'S MYSTERIOUS FRIEND

By "KICKIN'" BOB KENNON
as told to
FLORENCE BOYD FRANKLIN

Illustration by Charles M. Russell

MAYBE a lot of you folks have heard of Johnnie Matheson, and certainly there was a lot written about him at the time of his death in 1916, when he made his last trip across the Great Divide.

Johnnie hauled freight from Great Falls to Lewistown and Utica, Montana, stopping at Belt, Bill Cresap's place at Cora Creek, which was a very good stage station, then going on to Geyser and Stanford, Lewistown, Cottonwood, Rock Creek, Ross' Fork, and Judith River. Powells had a place where the older freight road crossed to Louse Creek and then old Soddy Cabins, on to Coyote Creek, Wolf Creek and then back to Stanford and Grafton stage station.

We met up with him many times on the stage road at Geyser, as this little cowtown was one of our favorite hangouts. Pat O'Hara ran the saloon, hotel, store and almost everything, and folks thought the world of the goodhearted Irishman and depended upon him.

Johnnie liked to pull in at Pat's coming and going between Great Falls and Lewistown. It was a good place to stop over for a while on the long trip.

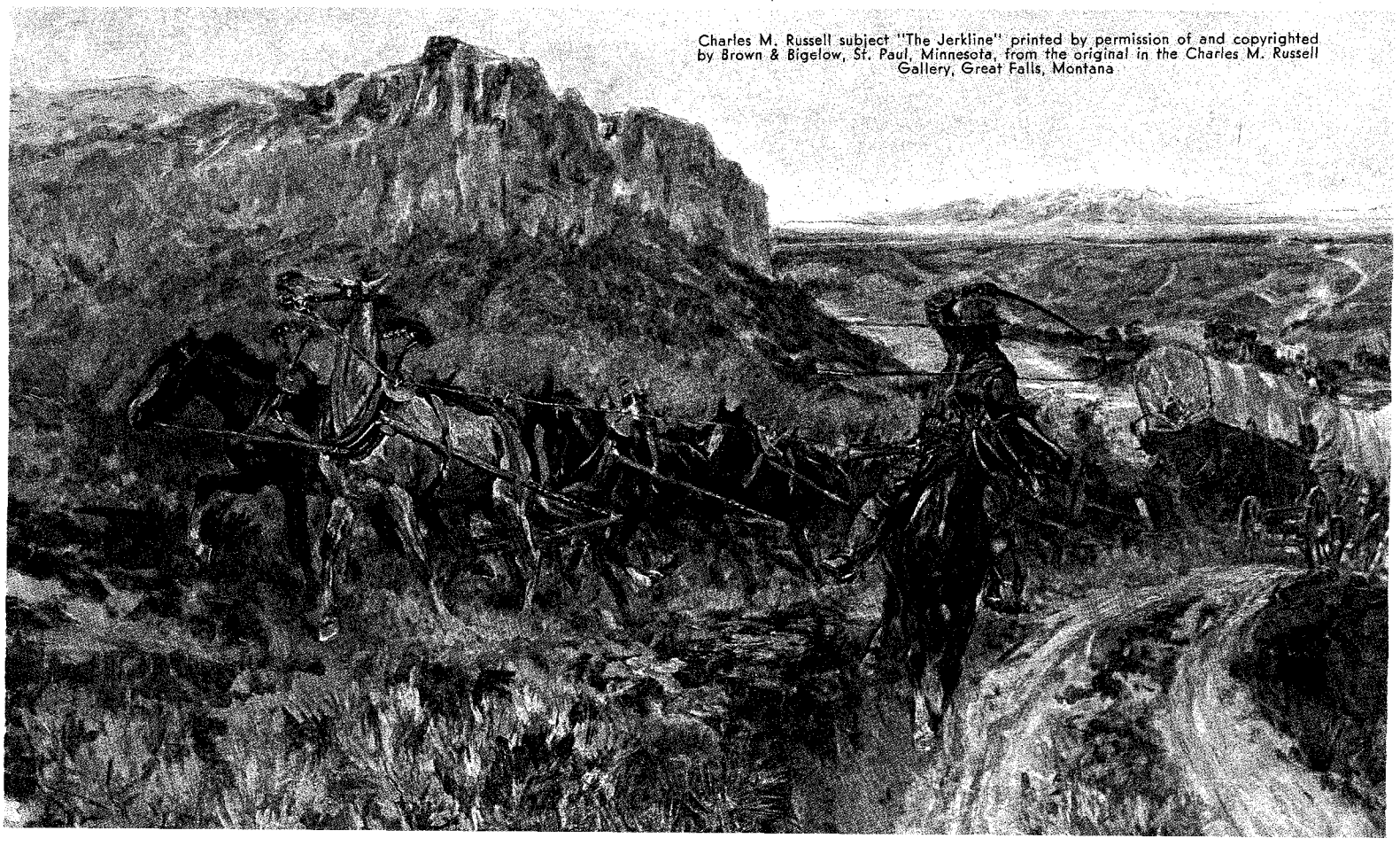
Between Belt and Great Falls, and located of course on the old stage road, was a half-way house called Georgie Day's place. Georgie was a woman. A family named Porter ran a more respectable house where families on a long journey could stay overnight. These places were not too far apart. Porter's place had no whiskey for sale, just comfort.

It was at Georgie Day's that we met up with Johnnie Matheson and a British fellow who went along with Johnnie next day on his haul to Utica. And it was Johnnie who at last solved the mystery of who this man really was. Folks said he was a titled British subject but others doubted it, and so he was always the topic of much speculation. He did a lot of drinking and gambling and was usually a heavy winner at the tables.

A good crowd was on hand as we could see by the buggies and wagons out in the yards, and hired hands were busy leading teams to the barn and feed corrals.

Often this Englishman was noticed in the company of an Indian woman who drove a team to a buckboard. It was usually in some out-of-the-way place that they would be seen together.

(Continued on page 47)



Charles M. Russell subject "The Jerkline" printed by permission of and copyrighted by Brown & Bigelow, St. Paul, Minnesota, from the original in the Charles M. Russell Gallery, Great Falls, Montana

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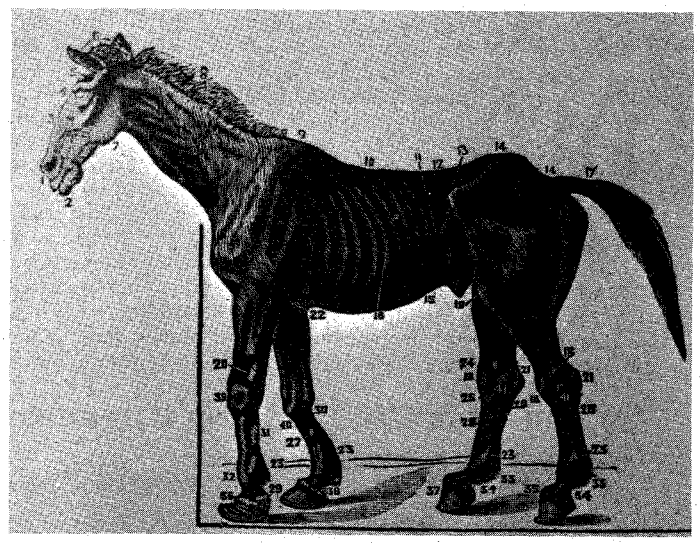
HOSS TRADING on the RED

-- a few practical tips on how to hornswoggle the uninitiated

By BILL HATFIELD
as told to
E. H. BREWINGTON

Photos copied from Farmer's Compendium by Crescent Publishing Company, St. Louis, Missouri, 1890



When Uncle Billy was buying a horse, he described it like this one.

OFFICIALLY we lived in Greer County, but Pa always said that we lived in Lapland—that is, where Texas lapped over into Oklahoma. That is what he said when things were going good. When the hot, burning winds of midsummer were so hot that a man couldn't even sweat, and when the grass and the cattle were dying for lack of water, then he called it Lapland—where Texas lapped over into hell.

We had a sort of shirt-tail outfit in 1899, too big to be a nester, and too little to be a rancher. We tried a little of both, but didn't fare too well at either. In the good years we bought new boots and levis. In the bad years we lived on sand plums and kafir-corn coffee. Sometimes the hands got paid; sometimes, there were no hands, and the bunkhouse was empty.

It was one of those times when the bunkhouse was empty, and some of the windmills weren't pumping water and the larder was mighty low, that Uncle Billy drifted by. Stopping for a meal (and Ma never turned away a hungry man), somehow before we knew exactly how, Uncle Billy had moved into the bunkhouse.

He passed under the name of William Eubanks, but to us he became Uncle Billy. Short of stature, his skin was the color of the double-girted saddle, which he always used. He was ageless, and he always had a string of a half dozen or so horses with him. Pa tried to tell him that we didn't need a hand, and couldn't pay a hand, and that he couldn't just move in like that. Uncle Billy didn't pay the slightest attention to Pa as he unpacked his meagre belongings.

In a few days Uncle Billy had become a part of the family, especially with us young 'uns. Even Pa grudgingly accepted the old man as one of us. Maybe he was the seventh son of a seventh son, because our fortunes took a turn for the better. The rains came. In time, cattle prices were a little better. When we got some hired hands, Uncle Billy sort of appointed himself straw-boss. And a good one he was, too. He knew everything there was to know about the cattle business. He could do more with a horse than any other man I have ever seen.

He had a knack of taking the meanest, most ornery hunk of hossflesh and turning him into a solid cow pony. Time meant nothing when he was breaking a horse, or doctoring one that was sick. When he was working with a sick horse, his hands, though calloused and rough from years on the range, were those of a ministering angel. His hands and his voice became soft, gentle and soothing.

Whatever he needed to doctor a horse, he seemed to be able to find in his duffel bag. (He called it his "possibles bag.") There was liniment and ointment and powders.

I was always Uncle Billy's number-one helper, and he would spend hours telling me how to treat an ailing hoss. When I had trouble remembering some of the "receipts" that he taught me, he would write them down on a scrap of paper. His flowing Spencerian script was not the kind which could be learned behind an ox-team or in a cattle camp.

One of his favorite remedies was what he called "Green Ointment." His receipt for making it, was as follows:

"Take rosin the size of a hen's egg, melt in a vessel over a slow fire, then put in the same quantity of beeswax; when this is dissolved, add one-half pound of hog's lard; when this is melted, put in two ounces of honey; when this is melted, add one-half pound spirits of turpentine, but white pine pitch is far better, if it can be had. Keep it boiling gently, stirring with a stick all the time until melted; then take off the fire and add two ounces verdigris; stir it right well; then put back on fire and give a few bubbles; then take off and strain through a fine sieve. It is then fit for use. This will cure scrofulous sores or chronic ulcers on man or beast."

He had what he called a "sartain" cure for tetanus, or lockjaw. According to Uncle Billy, it was necessary to bleed the horse moderately, and rub the jaws and spinal column thoroughly with chloroform. This will cure if used in the first stage. If it should fail, split the end of the tail and cut out the first caudal vertebra, and this will cure any case of lockjaw in three hours.

THE WEEKS became months, and the months turned into years. Uncle Billy stayed on. He would spend hours showing us youngsters how to braid a rawhide rope, or how to use a broken bottle to relieve a bloated horse. He would tell us stories by the hour of places afar—of San Antonio, El Paso, the Caprock country in Texas. He talked of everything, except himself. He never mentioned where he came from, or spoke of his folks. We never asked questions.

Though he passed under the name of Eubanks, once when he was washing up down at the trough, I saw a tattoo on his arm. It was a heart, with the initials "J. J." in the center.

If Uncle Billy had a profession, outside of being a doggone good all-around hand, it was the profession of hoss trading. A couple of times a year, when work was slack, he would throw his bedroll on his favorite roan filly, fasten halters and lead ropes on half a dozen or so of his own string of horses, and head out. In a few weeks he would return. Sometimes he would have more horses. Sometimes fewer. He never told any of us kids when he was going, but I suspect that Pa knew.

I never did find out exactly where Uncle Billy did his trading, but it must have been a fur piece away. None of our

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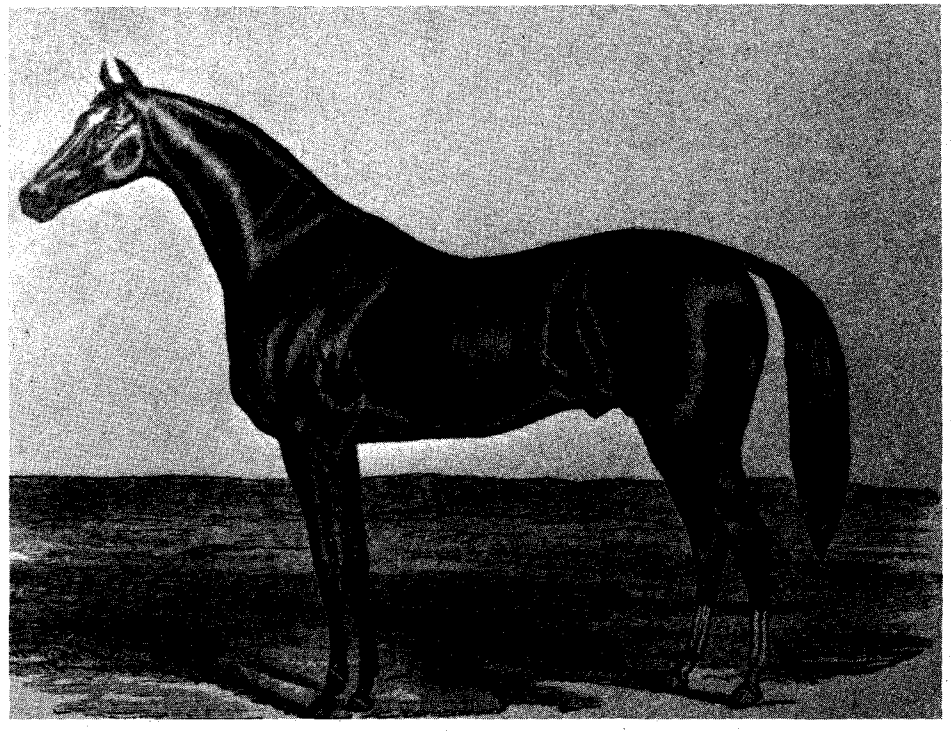

When Uncle Billy was selling a horse, he described it like this one.

neighbors were ever taken by him. The way he could handle horses, it would have been like stealing candy from a child to have gypped the neighboring hired hands.

Since I hung around him every spare minute, when Ma didn't have me doing chores, Uncle Billy must have finally decided that I would be an apt pupil to teach the art of hoss-trading. The first thing that he taught me was how to make a horse lame. That way you could buy him a lot cheaper.

"Button," he said, "the best and easiest way to make a hoss lame is to take a hair out of his mane or tail, thread it in a darning needle, pick up his foreleg, and run it through the center of the large tendon half-way between the knee and the fetlock. Cut off the hair the same length as the hair on his leg on each side, and in ten minutes he couldn't move that leg if he wanted to. When you want to cure it, take a pair of pinchers and pull out the hair, and rub with liniment. In ten minutes he will be well."

And Uncle Billy seemed to have a new lesson every day. He next taught me how to make a horse appear as if he were poisoned.

"You've seen pizened hosses, haven't you, Button?" he said. "Well, you can make any hoss act like he's pizened in five minutes. Jes' take a tallow candle and rub his gums and teeth right well with it, and he will refuse the best of feed and water. To cure, take fine charcoal, water, soap and a brush, and give his teeth and gums a good brushing, and he will be cured."

Uncle Billy also had a receipt for fattening a poor horse. Either that, or Uncle Billy's love and a lot of corn turned the trick. His receipt was: "Take nitric acid three drachms, saleratus two ounces, saltpetre three ounces, black antimony three ounces, assafoetida three ounces; mix and give one tablespoonful in every mess. This will fatten the poorest horse that lives in a few weeks."

He taught a willing pupil how to make a horse blind. Take common flaxseed and chew it fine in your mouth; then blow your breath in the horse's eye two or three times, and in ten minutes there will be a white scum over the eye. To cure, take a silk handkerchief, wrap it around your fingers, dip in fresh water, draw it over the eye and part the scum, which will disappear as quickly as it formed.

Uncle Billy's method for making a horse appear as if he was blind-staggered was to take a small rifle ball, drill a hole down through the centre; draw a five-inch string through and tie a knot on it; put the ball in one ear, push the string down in the ear so no one can see it, and it will appear to be the worst blind-staggered horse you ever saw. To cure, get hold of the string and pull out the ball.

"When you want to subdue a strange horse," he would say, "take some oil of rhodium and oil of cumin in equal quantities, mix and wet a sponge with it, and approach the horse and squeeze some of it on his tongue. That horse will be your servant, and you can do with him as you wish."

TO MAKE a horse appear as if glandered, take six ounces of unsalted butter, one ounce of tincture of assafoetida, mix and put half in each ear at night, and next morning he will run and smell worse than any glandered horse you ever saw. If left alone, these symptoms will soon go away.

Most horsemen can tell a horse's age pretty close by looking at his teeth. Uncle Billy could tell by this method, too, but he had another trick that for an older horse never failed, he said. After a horse is nine years old, a wrinkle comes in the eyelid, at the upper corner of the lower lid, and every year thereafter he has one well-defined wrinkle for each year of age over nine. If, for instance, a horse has three wrinkles, he is twelve; if four, thirteen. Add the number of wrinkles to nine, and you will always get it.

To make a horse appear as if badly foundered, take a fine wire and fasten it tight around its leg between foot and pastern, and smooth hair over it. In twenty minutes the horse will show lame. Do not leave the wire on over nine hours.

To put a young countenance on an old horse, make a small incision in the sunk place over the eye, insert the point of a goose quill and blow it up; close the external wound with thread, and it is done.

A horse that has the heaves is difficult to trade, but by drenching the horse with one-fourth pound of bird shot, he will not heave until they pass through.

To make a true pulling horse balk, take tincture cantharides one ounce, and corrosive sublimate one drachm; mix and bathe his shoulders at night. The next morning you will have the balkiest horse in the country.

Uncle Billy had a receipt for what he called his "restorative liquid." He said that he got the receipt from Dr. Tyndall, the old mysterious English horse farrier. According to Uncle Billy, this will give life to any horse that isn't dead. Take oil of cloves, one ounce, oil of anise one ounce, tincture cantharides one ounce, tincture assafoetida two ounces, oil rosemary one ounce; shake well and it is fit for use; give ten to fifteen drops in a bucket of water.

The old man had a remedy to cure any ailment that a sick horse could develop. He also had some method or other to make any horse, no matter how healthy, appear as if it were spending its last day on earth.

Pa often said that as drastic as Uncle Billy's receipts were, they were bound to "kill, cure, or fatten." It was debatable at times as to which would occur first.

His receipt for curing a horse that was foundered was typical. "Take gunpowder, soft soap and soot from a chimney, of each one tablespoonful; make into a pill with flour and give at one dose. This will cure in three hours, if taken immediately. In fifteen minutes give one quart of hog's lard and ride until warm."

As I grew older, so did Uncle Billy. One late summer the field work was laid by and the fall roundup was approaching. Then it was that Uncle Billy gathered up his string of horses, packed his possibles bag, and came by to tell me that he was leaving. This was the one and only time that he ever let me know when he was going. He shook my hand, which made me nine feet tall, and waving an airy farewell, he said, "I'll be seeing you, Button," as he rode southwestward.

We never saw him again. No one seemed to have known just where he went. That was many, many years ago, and if there are any remudas in the hereafter, I just hope that no one comes by wanting to trade horses, if Uncle Billy is watching the string.

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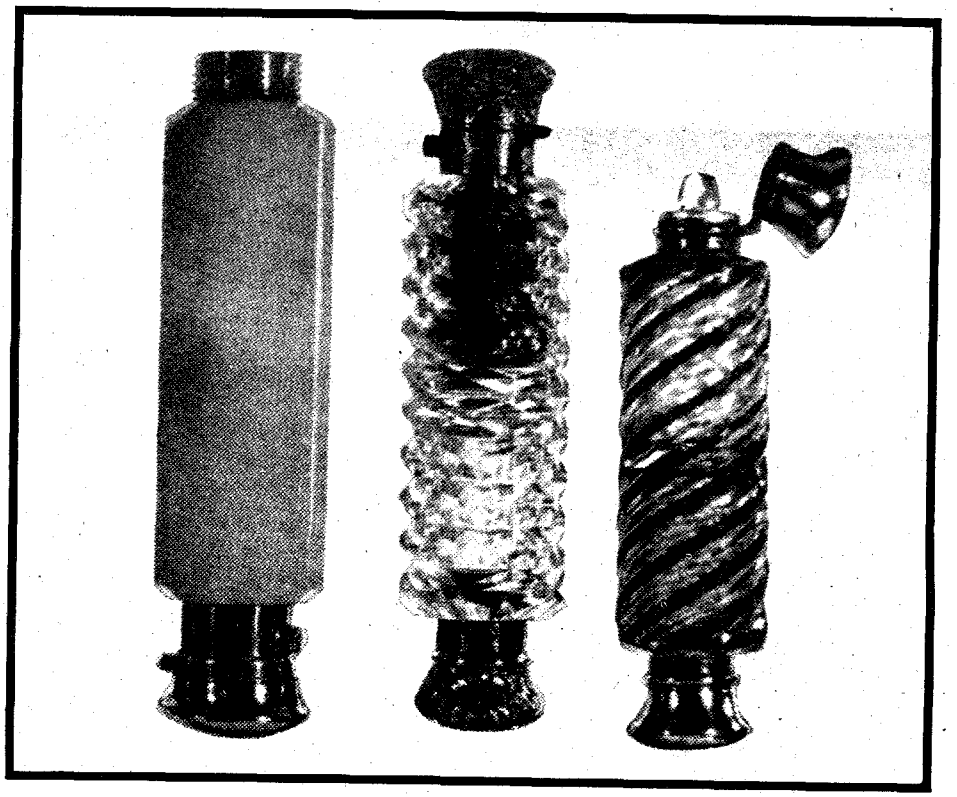
Above are a few of the unusual bottles used to market tonics and bitters. L. to R., Holtezerman Bitters (log cabin), Pineapple Bitters, National Bitters (corn ear), Greeley's Bitters (barrel), Fat Irishman Whiskey, Moon Bitters, Drake's Plantation Bitters (log cabin), Brown's Indian Queen Celery Tonic, Dr. Fisch Bitters (fish). Below is example of the first "stand-up" nursing bottle with nipple. Below right, example of scent bottles used by ladies when the wind was blowing from the tannery.

Grandpa's whiskey, grandma's cologne, great-grandma's spring tonic—the scramble is on to find the bottles that carried these items west

MORE and MORE are getting



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COLLECTORS GLASSY-EYED

By CLARENCE T. HUBBARD

Photos Courtesy Author

OUR EARLY Western pioneers—at least, the first contingents—did not have very much in the way of glass. Bottles were truly appreciated when they appeared.

And these early bottle creations, many still well preserved, set a mark of originality and perfection in glass moulding never surpassed. Is it any wonder that some of the early historical whiskey flasks now sell at $1,000 apiece?

Probably the first most welcome bottle was the nursery container for milk. Before it arrived, women used makeshift utensils such as the pewter pap spoon for feeding infants. Pioneer mothers watched the Indians feed their babies everything from ground walnuts to codfish. It was 1870 before rubber nursing nipples were available to fit onto improvised bottles. Great-great grandfather sometimes used cow's teats for nipples, or carved them out of wood, or perforated a chamois cloth. But as soon as glass bottles appeared, some with a nipple attached to a long protruding tube, many adaptations quickly developed. Later ones were decorated with nursery rhyme characters. I have one in the shape of an Indian papoose rack. Several excellent specimens appeared in 1840.

The first crude bottles for general utility use came over from England. These included many "seal" bottles on which the maker's seal appeared. Then shortly after the Revolution, American glass companies came into being, and carboys and heavy flasks appeared in which liquor was transported, including a flat bottle to fit saddle bags. Pitkins in chestnut shape, demijohns, tall bottles, squatty bottles, all hand blown and usually identified by pontil marks on the bottom, spread quickly over the nation.

From the great demand for whiskey and rum came a series of historical and pictorial flasks made by expert glass blowers, blown in mould, which are now museum exhibits. The texture of the glass was most attractive, the design artistic, the colors fascinating, and today they are all catalogued. Expensive, indeed, have these flasks become.

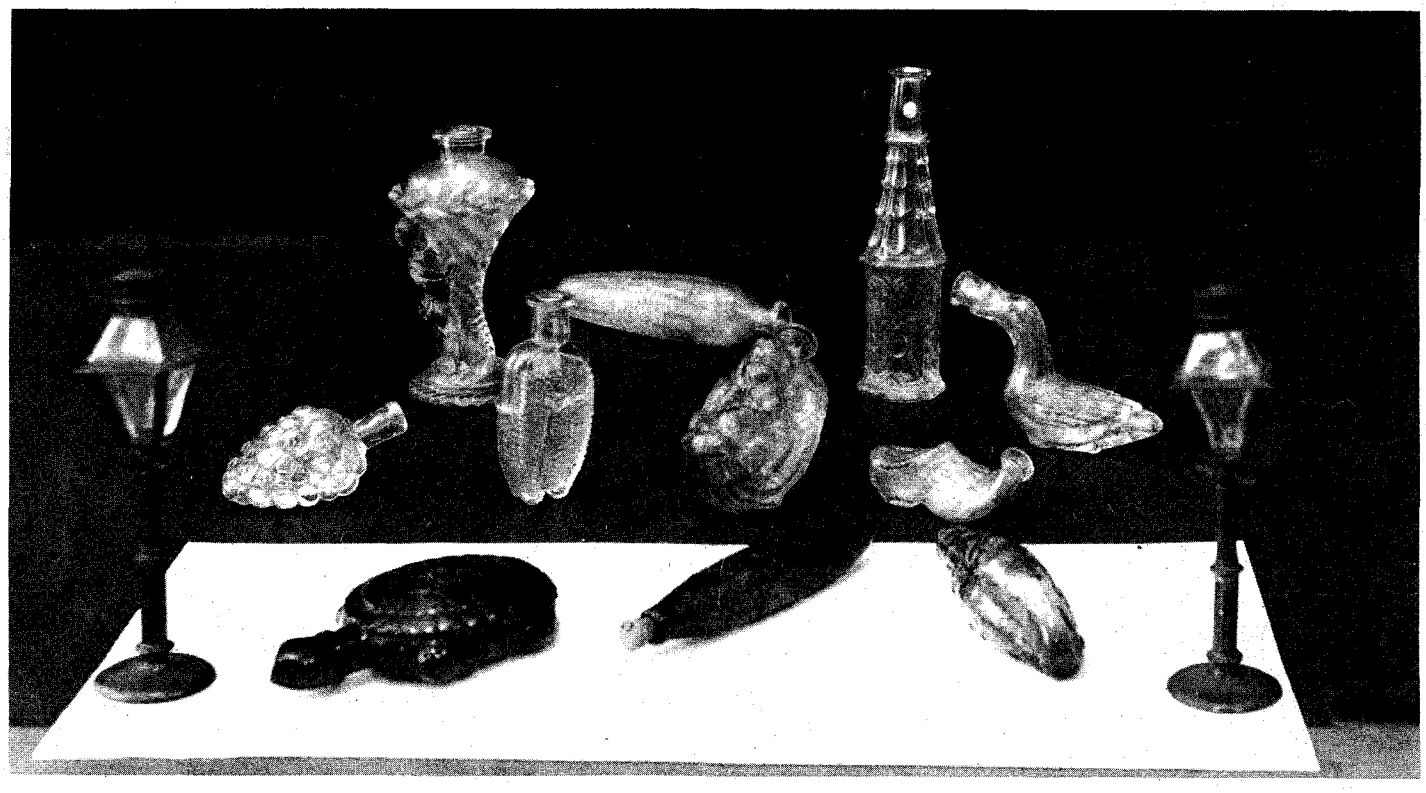
The eagle was predominant in their decorations, honoring the American bald eagle which never flew away from storms but always ascended above the clouds. Then profiles appeared, depicting our heroes from George Washington to "Rough and Ready" General Taylor.

As the West developed agriculturally, flasks appeared honoring "Corn For The World," and many flasks bore sheaves of grain. Our "plenty" suggested cornucopias.

There were amusing illustrations such as "Pike's Peak or Bust." And then came the log cabin, the latter quite political. In 1840, William Henry Harrison and Henry Clay tangled in the Whig Party trying to get a candidate to oppose Martin Van Buren. While Harrison was a man of wealth, his opposing party built an "image" of him as a poor man who lived in a log cabin and preferred to drink cider all day. Both the glass flasks and other bottles always showed a barrel of cider alongside the log cabin. As a result, poor Mr. Harrison was deluged with gifts of clothing.

Whiskey was bottled and sold in square, dark amber bottles shaped as log cabins, and this type was common in the West. The best known was the "Booz Log Cabin" bottle, dated 1840. Since the bottle was not made until 1860, the earlier date probably denoted the time when the distillery was initiated. E. C. Booz devised this bottle. Some say it popularized the word "booze," as many a plainsman would enter a saloon and, pointing to the log cabin bottle, say, "Give me a shot of Booz." The original moulds from which

Lampposts, grapes, turtles, cornucopias, ears of corn, cigars, cucumbers, shoes, ducks and church steeples were popular subjects for early cologne bottles. The unusual container in the center is titled "Moses in the Bulrushes."



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the Booz bottle was made are still around and Booz bottles are still being cast. They are sold in gift shops very cheaply. In the process the period after the word "Whiskey" in the originals have vanished. An authentic original Booz log cabin bottle is worth $100 or more today.

There were other log cabin whiskey bottles, such as Jacob's, which lined the shelves of early saloons.

NOT ALL of the evolution in bottle making was built around spirits. Glass rolling pins, now a much sought after antique item, were brought West by the women. I have one in a beautiful cobalt blue.

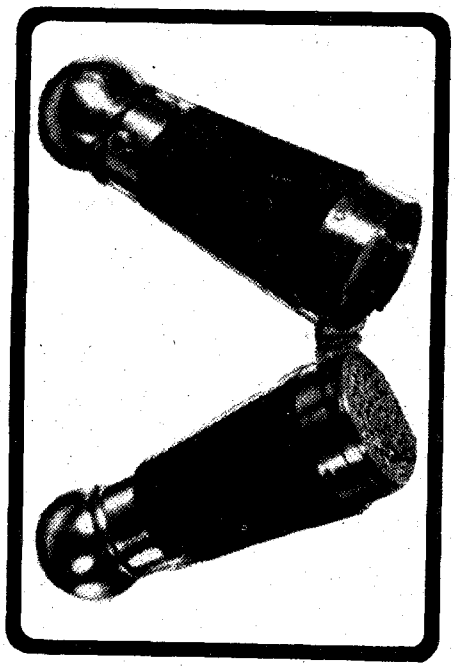
In England the salt tax was thirty times the cost of the salt. Salt boxes yielded to thefts so salt was put into wide-necked bottles. Then they changed to the roller shape, the bottles being hung in a dry place. Finally, in legend, they developed a "good luck" treatment and some were inscribed with "to your health" and such phrases. In early America they were used strictly as utilitarian pieces by our pioneer women, the pins usually being cast in flint glass.

From 1840 on, a strange bottle shaping idea developed, which comparatively recently has been "rediscovered" by antique fanciers—the "cute" and inexpensive bottles shaped as people, objects and things for the marketing of products. Now there is a scramble to find them. No cataloguing, as with the historical flasks, is possible.

The West was frequently honored in their shapely memorializations. No end of gun bottles appeared. I have six-shooters, dueling pistols, shotguns, derringers—often in actual size done in perfect detail even to the cross-hatched handles. They contained cologne for the ladies!

Cologne was cheap, sometimes just orange peel. Scent bottles could be held to the nose when passing tanneries, vinegar works and many other odiferous locations.

The very early scent bottles were shaped as seahorses. Then came a succession of small cologne bottles fashioned as dogs, foxes, bunches of grapes, church steeples, pipes, owls, Indians, parlor stoves, parlor lamps, lanterns—I have one shaped as a horse's hoof.



Left, a "break-away" hinged scent bottle. Below left, two unique pistol containers. Below, "Corn for the World" whiskey flasks were produced in a variety of colors including purple, dark red, pale blue and yellow-green.

Children's emulsions were sold in bottles shaped like babies' heads. Vinegar was sold in bottles resembling George Washington, Mr. Pickwick and Carrie Nation. Ink came in all kinds of fancy designs. Cod liver oil was found in amber fish bottles.

The use of bottles for household decorations started when Russian sailors, coming into Pacific Coast ports, sold "empties" shaped as polar bears. Vodka was distributed in them in Russia. They were of milk glass or of dark green, and were very attractive. The seamen sold them for $1 each. Saloonkeepers bought them to dress up the bar, and finally they found their way into homes.

Taking a lesson from the liquor sold in bottles shaped as hearts, as log cabins, and as grandfather's clocks, the imaginative makers of bitters really branched out and flooded the West with their "Indian" and other designs. Until the Pure Food Law in 1906, anything—including opium and alcohol—could be bottled as a tonic. And the bottles are cherished examples of artistry in glass.

Brown's Indian Queen, a container for celery tonic, was a statuette of beauty. She had a headdress, fancy leggings, and was much too nice for anyone to throw away! And there was no end of two-story log cabins, bottles shaped as barrels, ears of corn, pineapples, elephants, soldiers, tree trunks and bears. Today, bottle clubs in many western communities go out on "digging parties" to see what they can uncover, especially in ghost towns, and often they are well rewarded.

Adam H. Bogardus' hollow glass balls also deserve mention, for these patented glass balls are collected by many antiquarians. Colonel Bogardus was one of the West's greatest marksmen. Before "clay pigeons" were invented, he used hollow glass balls filled with feathers, and established an all-time high when he hit 990 out of 1,000. Buffalo Bill was a close second; Annie Oakley, next. The glass balls were serrated so shot would not slide off.

Another all glass invention, used on the first trains entering far West, was the Hardin Fire Extinguisher. It was a glass ball containing water. Thrown into an incipient fire, it was very effective.

From the patterns and shapes of early bottles, the more delicate glass trays, platters and bowls developed. The bottles were forerunners in their delineations of buffaloes, Indians, covered wagons, deer, gold rush scenes and prairie fires.

Bottles were precious. Discarded whiskey bottles served as flower holders, salt containers, practice targets. From the early bottles of leather, called leather packs, to swirled jug flasks which were a specialty of the midwestern glass houses, every container was put to use.

Patent stoppers quickly followed the trek West—notably Dr. Thatcher's milk top patent and the Haynes whiskey bottle lock. Flat snuff bottles with silver mounts followed the square, rough blown, large mouth jars used by the pioneers.

Every one of these many examples is diligently sought nowadays by collectors. The hunting grounds are often far from glamorous, but exciting items are lurking under that debris!

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By ORPHA COLLINS

Photo Courtesy Oregon Historical Society

Here's what can happen when some bored soldiers decide to shake things up a little!

On a cold wintry day in January, 1867, the earth trembled at Fort Klamath, Oregon.

The DAY ALL HELL BROKE LOOSE!

EARTHQUAKE AT FORT KLAMATH
Portland *Oregonian*, January 17, 1867

The following message has just been received: 'This morning at daylight we were startled from sleep by the precipitate shock of an earthquake immediately followed by the noise of a distant thunder. But in a little while quiet reigned; everyone was conversing and laughing heartily over the singular phenomenon, but our countenances soon underwent a serious change, for it began to grow dark.

"The whole heavens were full of a very black smoke or cloud; the air had a sulphurous smell, and ashes of a brownish color fell as fast as I ever saw it snow. We had to use candles in the messroom. The most of us went in to breakfast but had only got fairly into our seats when horror upon horror! The earth seemed rolling like waves on the ocean. Every one was thrown to the floor and only regained their feet to be placed in the same situation again.

"With the rattling of dishes, crashing of window glass, crackling of timbers of the buildings, and the screams of frightened boys, you could not imagine a more perfect chaos. Some of us gained the door and such a sight as met our gaze!

"The tall pines around the fort seemed lashing themselves into fury. The wagons in front of the stable were engaged in a pitched battle; horses and cattle lay crouched upon the ground uttering most pitiful moans; dogs howling and the unearthly yells of the Klamath Indians, encamped near the fort, completed the scene.

"We imagined we were amid the wreck of matter and crush of worlds. The sutler's store was thrown about twenty feet from its former position.

"There were no lives lost, and no serious accidents to anyone; there were quite a number of bruised shins and skinned noses. No serious damage to any of the buildings, all being log and frame houses; but I do not think there is a whole pane of glass left at the post.

"There were many speculations as to the cause of this most singular freak of nature but most of us are of the opinion that a volcano has broken loose near the Klamath Marsh, as a continuous dark volume of smoke is seen in that direction. Some of the soldiers have volunteered to go up and find out if we have a monster vomiting fire near us or not.

"There was about half an hour between the first and second shocks. The first was only perceptible; the second lasted as near as can be judged from various opinions, from two or to three minutes."

The letter was followed by a notation: "By order of Commander of Post: Ned L. Tennison, Quartermaster's Clerk says, 'Mr. Whitmore has just arrived from the Agency and reports that Klamath Lake has lowered about six feet and is still falling. Crooked River, a stream between this place and the Agency, was dried up completely.' "

EXCEPT for the editor of the Jacksonville (Oregon) *Sentinel* who considered the story a fraud and so stated, the glaring headlines from other West Coast papers, taking up the word from the *Oregonian*, caused the news to spread far and wide—all over the United States and by cable, across the ocean.

The War Department made an investigation but no immediate or definite results came to light as to why such a story originated or by whom it was written.

The next mention of the quake was in a book written by John Van Tramp, *Prairie and Rocky Mountain Adventures*, published in 1868, after which the incident was virtually forgotten.

Then in December, 1954 an interesting account of the old-time happening was offered by an amateur historian to a Klamath Falls, Oregon, newspaper. Bill Jenkins, the young editor, became interested in it and wrote an editorial or two on the subject inquiring if anyone could tell the full story. This caused a sort of "shake-up" among the *Herald's* readers.

Beuna Stone, one of Klamath County's

(Continued on page 55)

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By MAURICE KILDARE

Littleman, at age forty

Courtesy Cecil Richardson

The Indian had many enemies and no time to gather his friends; so he arranged that one of his foes would help him kill the others—and it worked!

LITTLEMAN'S STRANGE REVENGE

ON MOCCASINED feet Littleman descended the narrow cleft, Winchester rifle held ready to fire. The cliff trail below might well harbor death. If Paiute Indians lurked about, as he hoped, then he would exact further revenge for his murdered family by killing a few before they got him.

Barely wide enough for a single rider to ascend from the river, the shelf trail passed the knife-thin fault in the canyon wall, fully 800 feet above the floor. Before emerging from cover, Littleman studied the rock dust which sprinkled the trail's stone surface. No mark of man or beast disfigured its evenness. Still wary, for his enemies were crafty, he stepped down from the jagged rock seam. For ten motionless minutes he waited, listening intently.

The Paiutes had not come back, not even to recover the body of their tribesman, one shot down three months before.

Never relaxing his vigilance, Littleman moved onto the trail, reconnoitering along it north toward the San Juan River. Fifty feet distant, a bulging shoulder of the cliff face overhanging the trail blocked sight of the stream and canyon mouth. This was the danger point. A rider must lean forward and over in the saddle to pass. Then he turned slowly right, toward a small pocket in the upper cliff wall. On the instant he froze.

His eyes saw the object but the intelligence did not communicate fast enough into his brain. The rifle snapped around, and trigger finger squeezed before he realized that it was a harmless dead Indian. Instinctively he threw the muzzle upward as the shot whammed out, sending the bullet over the canyon wall rim.

As the crash echoed away, Littleman stared hard. Five feet from where he stood, a coppery-faced Paiute sat on a rock. Sightless eyes gazed straight ahead. The sagging open mouth displayed teeth in a revolting, fixed grin.

Although expecting enemies and prepared for the worst, Littleman was badly shaken by this horrible spectre of death. It was the enemy he had shot, who had

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Courtesy Bureau of Ethnology

The renegade Paiute Chief Dobby

fallen against the cliff face, sliding down to the trail as his horse pitched over to destruction below. Although fatally wounded through the chest, the Paiute had managed to reach a flat sandstone. There he had sat to await the inevitable end.

It took Littleman several minutes to realize what had happened. Dry, hot air had mummified the body. Except for the cast of terrible destiny about the smooth brown face, the fully dressed figure, even to head bandana, might have been alive. He sat there with hands in his lap, as if only resting a moment beside the trail.

THAT JUNE day of 1890, Littleman owned steel nerves, was afraid of nothing on earth, and bent solely on vengeance. Calming, he viewed the situation anew, wondering if the mummified Paiute could be used to his advantage. Supposing his enemies, raiding again into Navajo Indian country via this secret trail, came suddenly on the spectre, would they not also be momentarily stricken with ghostly fear as he had been?

If brought to a paralyzed pause, from above them he could kill several. But further appraisal revealed that in its present position, riders would not spot the dummy until almost past—not even then unless it was broad daylight with the sun directly overhead.

Littleman leaned his Winchester against the rocks. Placing one flat stone beside the trail in the right position, he added a second to it to increase height.

The Paiute had been dead so long that no *chindi* (evil spirit of the deceased) was involved to harm him. The body seemed very light as he lifted it off the rock to place it on the new pedestal. To make sure it was strategically positioned, Littleman walked down the trail. Turning, he advanced slowly until the grisly object confronted him abruptly. He was satisfied.

Carefully he erased all sign of his movements, retrieved the Winchester, and climbed through the crack to the overhanging rim of solid sandstone. He had erected a low wall of stones, over which a rifle could cover all open space on the near side of the bulge. There he kept food, extra cartridges and a blanket. Water was obtained at a seep spring in the rocks a hundred feet away. Once more he settled down to wait. Surely the hated Paiutes were due to make another sortie into Navajo country—his country.

Led by their renegade chief, Dobby, they had come the last time while Littleman was away from his home at Little Navajo Mountain. He was visiting a brother south of Navajo Canyon on Kaibeto Plateau. Then twenty-three years old, his wife was eighteen and their son ten months old. There at Little Navajo under the hulking shadow of big Navajo Mountain he had established his family with a flock of sheep and some cattle.

The Paiutes rolled in stealthily during the night. Spreading into small groups, each one attacked a different Navajo hogan. They stole horses, murdered people, pillaged homes of personal property, and butchered sheep. The carcasses and loot were packed out on stolen horses as they fled north at daybreak for their own country across the San Juan.

At Littleman's hogan they wantonly had killed his helpless wife and baby son. After butchering all the sheep their pack stock could carry, they shot most of the remaining flock.

A messenger reached Littleman the next morning and he raced home to utter desolation. With the light of another dawn he took the enemy's trail, only to meet a returning Navajo war party. They had lost trace of the Paiutes before reaching the river. All crossings were inspected, without finding a sign of them. The Paiutes had simply vanished.

"But they surely crossed the river," Littleman insisted bitterly. "If they had gone east to escape us, other Navajos would report their whereabouts."

The old men regarded him silently in their pity of his intense grief. Born and raised in that country, they knew intimately every trail and canyon in it. Therefore, if not crossing by any of the known fords, then the Paiutes must have used magic to disappear.

"They have made a secret trail," Littleman declared. "We must find it!"

Of course the war party thought he had lost his wits dwelling too much on his sorrow and hate. They abandoned further attempts to find enemies long since safe in their native habitat of southern Utah.

LITTLEMAN alone continued seeking their getaway route. He spent a month, then another, searching scores of canyons emptying spring-fed creeks into the muddy San Juan. Then one dull afternoon, while lurking on the San Juan side canyon, and when he had all but given up hope, he saw fifteen Paiutes ride down into the river. They crossed over hard, rock bottom shallows, vivid and clearly defined in the thin air.

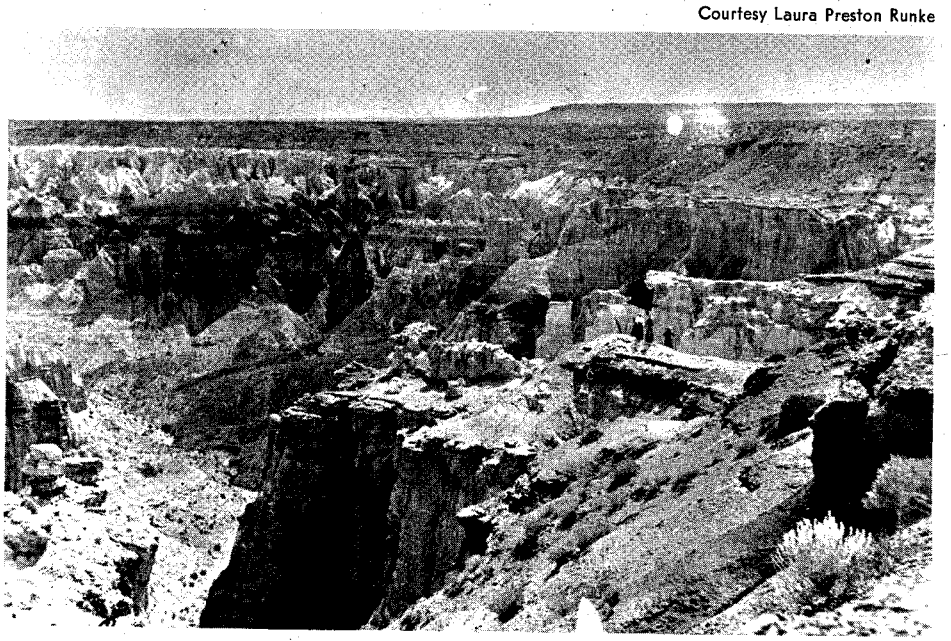
Instead of verging downstream to the regular ford, they turned up the river. Within minutes they entered the deep, narrow defile on top of which he lay concealed. When they disappeared, he crawled to the very edge of the precipice.

Twenty minutes or so elapsed, and he had grown restless when a rider appeared, seemingly in a void half-way up the cliff wall high over the sandy floor. Only then did Littleman perceive the thread-like shelf trail to which riders could cling single file. As he would learn later on tracing it out, the trail topped out at the canyon's head onto a five-acre stretch of solid, pitted stone. This surface retained no sign by which they could be tracked.

Leveling the rifle, he waited until the foremost rider rounded the bulge and straightened up in his saddle. He did not try to isolate Dobby, the Paiute whom he hated most. In his eagerness to kill,

The three women (arrow) are looking down into the canyon where the Paiutes fell off the trail to their doom.

Courtesy Laura Preston Runke



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Courtesy Author

Above is Littleman's sister, Old Woman Dohi. Shown below, Hoskinni Begay, who spied on the Navajo.

Courtesy Charles Kelly

he pulled the trigger prematurely.

As the crash of the shot echoed from wall to wall in the narrow confines, the near rider fell out of the saddle against the cliff face. His horse wheeled and swung sideways, plunging into the deep abyss.

Littleman's mistake was in not waiting until more of the band had rounded the bulge. In fact he never saw them until they had forded the river to the Utah side. Convinced that the Paiute he hit had died instantly with a bullet through the chest, he did not descend to make sure of his victim.

Days later when he found the thin crack of the fault through which he could force his body, he went below far enough to survey the secret trail. At that time he did not bother hunting for a dead Indian. The hungry Paiutes would come again, of that he felt confident, so he bided his time.

Utah cattlemen guarded their range herds against them. At the first evidence that Paiutes were sallying forth after beef, they mounted posses to drive them back into the mountains and wastelands. Not owning stock, and wild game being scarce, they turned their attention to the Navajo Indians south of the river.

AFTER setting the mummy trap Littleman waited tirelessly for victims. Three days had elapsed before the afternoon riders crossed the river once more. He watched them make a distant cliff shoulder before disappearing from view.

In time they arrived at the wall bulge. Dobby was not one of the ten Paiutes. The foremost wore a dirty red piece of flannel around shaggy hair. It was he who made first contact with the fearsome mummy, reining up in sheer amazement.

Littleman took steady aim, but before he could pull the trigger pandemomium broke out. Uttering a cry of terror, the leading Paiute attempted to escape from the gruesome spectre.

On the narrow shelf he jerked his horse's head left in an attempt to get turned to flee. The animal lost solid footing instantly. Forefeet encountering empty space, it made a desperate sideways lunge with its rear feet, throwing hindquarters into the next spotted pony. Then it was gone with its rider, squealing in mortal fear of the unknown.

Seconds later a heavy crash below stilled their combined cries for all time. But great damage had been done behind them. The struck horse was forced backward into another. Panicked, the two riders fought to save themselves and in doing so, whammed into still one more. In a mass of tangled limbs all plunged over the edge.

Instantly the shelf was cleared back to the bulge. The remaining six Indians, without knowing the exact cause of the debacle were not too addled to think. They turned their mounts carefully against the cliff face and hurriedly departed.

When eerie silence had settled over the death scene, Littleman laughed—and laughed and laughed. Not a shot had been necessary to dispose of the four murderous Paiutes. The spectre placed in correct position proved a far greater success than he could have imagined. At best he had only hoped to hold them stricken long enough to kill at least two.

Half an hour later he saw the survivors streaking across the river into Utah. On reaching their wickiup village they would be unable to explain what actually happened. Others were certain to come trying to find out the answer. One of them might be Dobby, the red outlaw most responsible for the murder of Littleman's wife and son. That name, given him by Navajos, had originally been Dobby-Kin, deriving from the fact that he hid out in a cliff ruin from white officers hunting him for the murder of a settler's family in Colorado.

(Kin means house in the Navajo language, but "dobby" is not in the Navajo vocabulary; probably a local colloquialism.)

Because enemies coming to investigate might arrive during the night, Littleman descended the stone crack when it became dark. Yet none showed up. After two foodless days he was forced out. His oldest sister, known fondly as Old Woman Dohi, lived nearest on the summer sheep range. At a jog trot he made the seven miles to her seasonal hogan. He had come on foot because a horse could not take him over cliffs and through forbidding rock masses.

She happened to be at home alone, her husband Dohi having gone to a distant trading post. The unmarried children herded sheep. Asking many questions while he bolted fried bread and mutton, she grew most concerned.

"You should not be on this venture alone," she warned.

But Littleman had no time to spare to seek out reinforcements. "I must hurry back," he said, "for maybe Dobby will come next time. Him I shall slay in revenge for what he did to mine!"

His sister packed a flour sack with grub, lamenting the fact that smoke giving his position away would prevent his having coffee during the lonely vigil. Littleman rounded up one of his own horses, and saddled. Recently he had located a pocket filled with grass where the animal could be concealed from scouts.

When he started back, his sister rode part way. Within two miles of his hiding place he pointed through a cleft in high standing salmon pink rocks. "Once in there the only place one can go is to where I wait on the rim."

Leaving his sister, he hurried on. He was anxious to know if any Paiutes had been around during his absence, so he put his horse away and descended the crack. The weird, awe inspiring mummy remained undisturbed. No recent sign existed on the trail surface.

As Littleman started his return climb, a large number of black vultures winged upward high into the air from the canyon floor. That could mean only one thing: they had been disturbed at a scavengers' feast. Dropping back onto the shelf he crawled flat to the edge and peered over. Two Paiutes sat their ponies staring at the broken and torn bodies of men and horses at the canyon wall's base.

"So now they will come on top," Littleman assured himself.

NIGHT approached again. Debating whether to return to the top, he concluded to remain below. After the sun went down and the afterglow faded from the sky he listened intently for any sound of approaching enemies.

The moon came up. Then he discovered the shadows it cast from the wall-bulge moved out alive. The Paiute came barefooted, well in advance of the second one.

In an instant the leader halted, transfixed. He had found the mummy, appearing more grotesque than ever bathed in a shaft of new moonlight. For all of a

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minute he stood paralyzed, then uttering a piercing scream he shouted words in his own tongue. When he wheeled around, his thudding feet passed too near the shelf edge, and over he plunged. Only his terrified cry echoed, until the smash below on sharp rocks broke his body.

Littleman sped for the bulge, rifle cocked. But he never saw or heard the second Paiute, who bolted at the first warning of his terrified companion. Later he appeared crossing the river leading a riderless horse.

Even as the days passed without more Paiutes entering the trap, Littleman did not become overly concerned. The one who escaped, never seeing the spectre, had been warned of something nameless before the other pitched over to destruction. For awhile the secret trail would be avoided.

Three months later, in September, this deduction was borne out. Littleman never left the canyon rim after his faithful sister began bringing food every few days.

One day she began, "You know that some of the *deneh* (Navajos) have married Paiutes in Monument Valley. They are repeating strange stories from them, who swear a death-dealing *chindi* now dwells in these river canyons. It has the power to kill men. So they say this place is cursed."

Smiling in satisfaction, for his enemies were greatly disturbed, he replied, "They have slain themselves in fear of retribution. I have not fired a shot to kill them!"

Anxiously she asked, "Can you be sure that evil spirits are not aiding you in your quest?"

There were no untoward circumstances indicating such volunteer help, he assured her. Certainly he was not foolish enough to attempt communication with *chindis*. The Paiutes died exactly as he had described in the beginning.

When his sister departed, Littleman settled down to patient watching again. The next day she hurried back.

"Dobby is at the Paiute village of Willow Springs!" she reported. "Navajos have seen him hiding there under Echo Cliffs."

While surprised, Littleman was also very pleased. For once the hated Dobby unwisely had placed himself within reach of a bullet. If caught away from his Utah hideouts on Blue Mountain, he could be killed. Promptly announcing his plan to go there, Littleman came away from the rim with his sister.

"But if you kill him, won't the white man's officers be after you?" she questioned fearfully.

Actually, Dobby had fled so far south because Federal lawmen must be closing in on him at last, Littleman reasoned. The renegade had long been wanted for several murders and raids in Utah and Colorado. It would appear now that U. S. marshals were finally determined to run him down.

So great was Littleman's eagerness to come up with Dobby that on reaching the Dohi hogan, he saddled a fresh horse to head south immediately. Not even his brother-in-law's plea that he delay long enough for others to accompany him caused Littleman to pause.

RIDING straight through, some sixty miles, by dawn Littleman lay in Echo Cliffs rocks overlooking the Paiute village of brush wickiups. Breakfast fires soon smoked the bright air. Indians appeared going about their daily tasks. But nowhere among them was the one he most wanted to place before his rifle sights.

Down below the cliffs on the Lee Ferry trail, a trading post stood beside Hamblin Wash. Withdrawing after midday, Littleman rode there. In the store bullpen he smoked free tobacco, and bought two sacks for himself. When the last local Paiute Indian had sauntered out, he said to the trader, George McAdams, that he had heard Dobby was somewhere around Willow Springs.

McAdams shook his head, replying in Navajo, "He left before sundown last night. Headed back to Utah with his outfit because he heard that officers were coming here looking for him."

The trader in the course of their conversation informed Littleman also that Dobby had departed via Moen Ave. A few Paiute families lived there. Probably he stayed overnight. Littleman talked a bit longer to allay suspicion, should he manage to kill Dobby. Then mounting his horse, he ascended to the sandy plateau, racing north for Moen Ave. Rounding the series of spring irrigated farms on top, he cut over into the ascending main trail. Sometime that very afternoon, he could see that many riders in a bunch had passed north.

Taking after them, Littleman did not halt at sunset but continued through to the vicinity of the trading post at Redlake. He arrived there around midnight and located a Navajo family. From them he learned that Dobby, accompanied by twelve men and four women, had left the trading post with the announced intention of camping the night in Cow Springs Canyon.

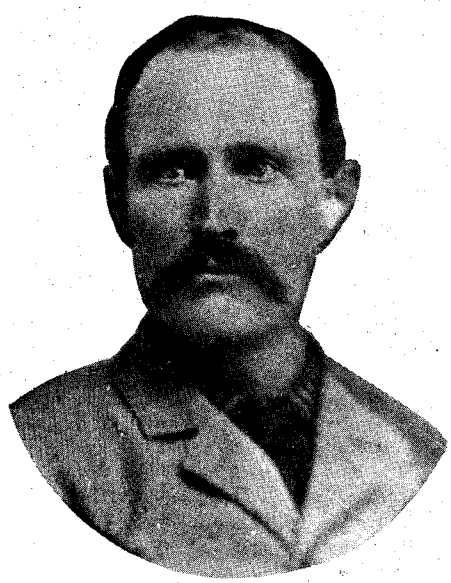
Riding on eight miles under bright stars, Littleman crossed the rugged canyon well above the long established campsite for travelers. Hobbling out, he stole back afoot to the low precipice overlooking the camp. A single firebed retained a few coals.

Returning to his horse, he rolled into a blanket and slept until morning. Clouds scurried across the sky. Munching on a piece of jerked beef, Littleman returned to the canyon rim to watch the Paiutes rouse out.

Horses were brought in from grazing while breakfast cooked. Dobby was the last to join those eating at the small fire. He wore a light blue shirt and his head was wrapped in a black scarf.

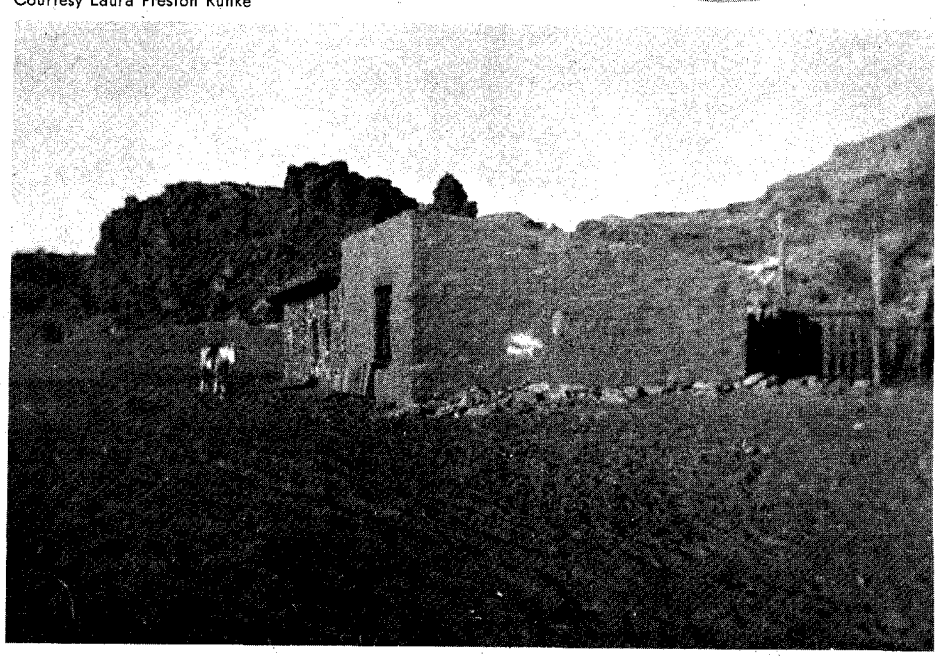
Littleman leveled on him after Dobby squatted between two men at the fire. He was in the act of raising a tin cup of coffee to his mouth when the rifle spewed a hunk of lead. Dobby fell backward, stretched his toppled body, and didn't move. At the same instant the man sitting on his left toppled forward. He moved a few inches and straightened his legs but Dobby did not stir.

(Continued on page 58)



At right, Indian trader George McAdams. Below, Old Willow Springs trading post as it appeared in Littleman's time.

Courtesy Laura Preston Runke



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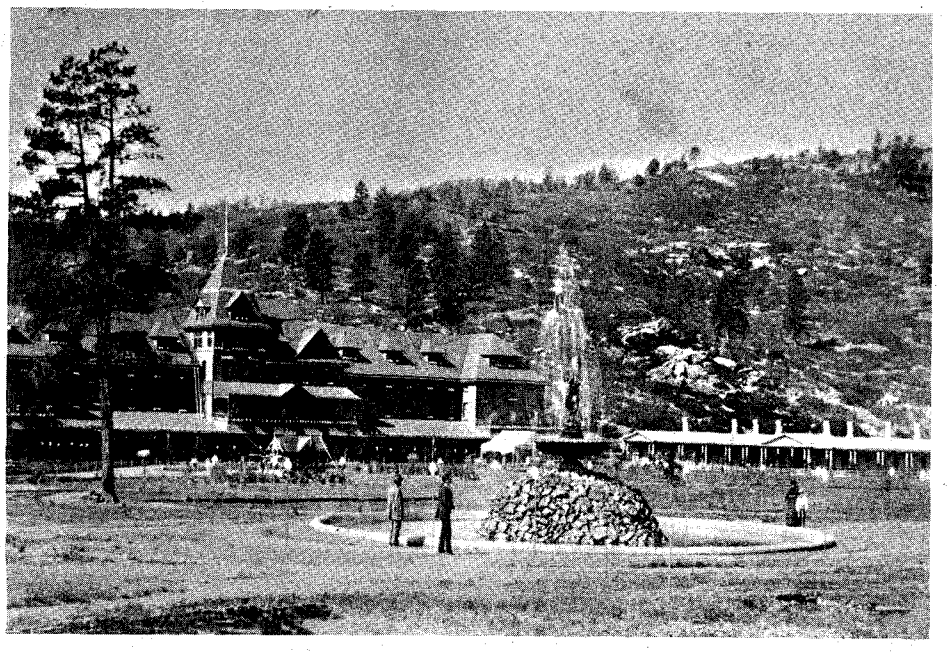
In her day the hotel was like a jewel on the hand of a beautiful lady. But the hand grew old and the ring grew heavy many, many years ago. The ball was over...



By PEARL STANFORD

Photos Courtesy Author

The first Montezuma near Las Vegas, New Mexico, in 1882, built by the Santa Fe Railroad

Fabulous MONTEZUMA

NO MATTER from what direction you approach the town and the valley of Las Vegas, New Mexico, a building of medieval splendor can be seen high on its hill, shrouded in the early morning mists, or gleaming in the heat of the noonday sun or wrapped in the purple shadows of evening.

The Pecos Indians, whose homes for ages centered in the valley around the Great Meadows, had a beautiful and pathetic legend concerning their leader, Montezuma, who was killed in a battle. Being a gentle and trusting people, they were sure their beloved chief had just disappeared into the clouds which hovered over their native mountains, and that he would return to them in a far distant age, clad in garments of glory.

Century after century passed and they still kept their sacred fire which burned as brightly as their undying faith. But in time the fire in the temple and their faith died out. The last brave disappeared and the ancient shrine lay in ruins. Today in the mountains of this legendary tribe stands a castle-like building known as The Mexican National Pontificial Seminary of Our Lady of Guadalupe, but is always referred to as the Montezuma Seminary.

The story of this building has a fascinating history and if the fires burn in memory of the long-ago Pecos Indians, they have certainly followed a strange course.

During my high school days, prior to 1920, Montezuma was an empty building in the Gallinas Canyon where we had picnics, skating parties and other school outings. None of these outings would have been complete without a tour of the old landmark. To us it was not just another building left to decay and crumble with the passing of time, but rather a fairytale castle that held the

The Montezuma dining hall could accommodate 500 guests.

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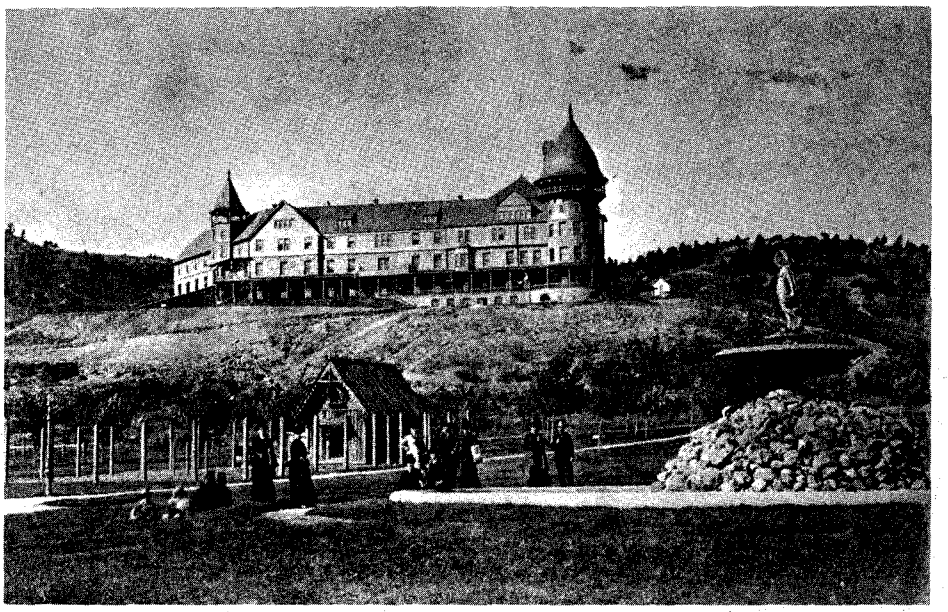
secrets of its past, and defied the elements that sought to destroy it.

We would explore the rooms with their high ceilings, peeling paint and sagging wallpaper, gaping with wonder at the vastness of the old hotel. Cobwebs and dust were everywhere, windowpanes were missing, and the only inhabitants were birds and bats. Souvenir hunters had taken their toll.

The silence that hung over the place was awesome. We found ourselves speaking in whispers. Our tour of inspection always ended with a climb to the top of the main cupola where we stood transfixed by the breathtaking view of the surrounding country. We used the stairs to make this climb, but coming back to the main floor we became adventurous and descended via the circular stair railing.



The second "Montezuma" Hotel, named the Phoenix, built after the fire of 1884

THE fabulous Montezuma Hotel was built by the Santa Fe Railroad shortly before the turn of the century. Montezuma was one of the first million-dollar resort hotels in the West and was the playground of millionaires from both this and foreign countries. It was located six miles northwest of Las Vegas, where the Gallinas Canyon begins its ascent into the high country. Here the swift moving Gallinas River, in its descent from the canyon, makes a bend moving out onto the plains, down through the town and flowing south until it loses its identity in the Pecos River. At that bend in the river on a small hill that rises to meet the backdrop of the majestic mountains stands the fortress-like building known as Montezuma.

Legend says that long before the coming of the white man the present site of the hotel was the meeting place for many Indian tribes who used the curative waters of its numerous hot springs. Making yearly treks over the mountains and from the plains, they brought their old and their sick to bathe in the healing waters.

In 1864 a Dr. Bloodworth built the first private health baths at the springs. Later a man named Moore came into possession of the property. He made many improvements on the bathhouse and named it the Old Adobe House. Many famous and notorious guests visited the springs, among them Jesse James, who was a boyhood friend of Moore. In 1879 Moore sold out to eastern promoters who built the first hotel. This was a three-story stone structure costing $75,000 and was known as the Las Vegas Hot Springs Hotel. They also built a stone bathhouse. These two structures are in use today.

The Santa Fe Railroad bought the property in 1880, ran a spur line to the springs, and built the resort hotel. They renamed the property Montezuma and the hotel was opened the night of April 7, 1882. Don Miguel A. Otero, father of one of New Mexico's territorial governors, Miguel A. Otero, Jr., made the opening speech.

The hotel was L-shaped, a three-story building containing 300 rooms. In front was a circular park with a fountain. There was a huge carriage house and numerous bridle paths. A wine cellar, the card rooms, a dining room seating 500 persons and a casino accommodating 1,000, the oak paneling, marble fireplaces, Axminster rugs and imported furniture brought the cost of the hotel to a fantastic figure for that day and time.

ON JANUARY 8, 1884, a porter discovered a fire in the building. The fire company of Las Vegas was called but there was actually no way to save the hotel. The aviary and the menagerie, finest in the Southwest, were destroyed. Owners estimated their loss at $150,000.

The new hotel which rose from the ashes was appropriately called the Phoenix, but the name never won popular acceptance and to this day is still "Montezuma."

The architecture of the new building was patterned after the Queen Anne Period. The main cupola was over six stories high, and the open gallery surrounding the walls gave the appearance of a fortress. Electricity to operate the building was generated on the grounds. A massive compound steam pump was used to raise water from the Gallinas River to a million-gallon reservoir. Hose reels were placed on every floor but later this building, too, suffered fire damage.

The new hotel contained 172 rooms. The original Las Vegas Hot Springs Hotel, referred to in the beginning of this article, was remodeled into an annex containing 77 rooms, and was called the Mountain House. In addition there were two cottages and a double house containing twenty rooms called the hospital. Other buildings included a large stable, power plant, ice house, depot, and a foreman's cottage. In the main hotel building was an electric elevator, the first one built in New Mexico.

The casino was a huge room containing both a dance floor and a stage. The dining room could seat 500 people. In the lobby an enormous fireplace, designed and built by a French artisan, extended through three floors. A circular stairway, extending from the top floor to the lobby, was a most beautiful and fascinating structure.

The furniture in the hotel was of imported woods, cocobolo, ebony and French walnut. The billiard parlors and bowling alleys were furnished in native pine.

Below the main building was the park and the fountain, graveled walks, shade trees, rare flowers and bluegrass lawns (grass for these lawns was said to have been brought from Lawrence, Kansas). Suspension and rustic bridges were constructed at various places across the Gallinas River. There were courts for such outdoor games as archery, lawn tennis, croquet and cricket. The greenhouse was stocked with rare plants and a collection of rare stones and mineral specimens from all over the world.

The bathhouse of native red stone was two stories high, its upper floor being used for offices. Twenty-three springs ranging in temperature from 50 to 144 degrees fahrenheit, containing lithia, sulphur, and sodium compounds, converged direct from the springs to the bathhouse. The capacity of this spa was 500 baths daily from a choice of medicated, electric, vapor, shampoo, ring baths, tub, shower and spray.

Cost to guests was rather flexible: Tub bath 50c; vapor and pack, tub and pack, or vapor showers 75c; shampoo, electric, medicated and mercurial $1.00. Soap, towels and attendant free. Rates at the bathhouse were $3.00 and $4.00 per day or $17.50 to $24.50 per week. Rates at the Mountain House (not the main hotel) were $2.00 to $3.00 per day or $12.00 to $17.50 per week.

The surrounding mountains and plains were a hunter's paradise, abounding in deer, elk, antelope, grouse, wild turkey, bear and mountain lion.

AS LONG as the hotel belonged to the Santa Fe the cuisine was under the direct supervision of Fred Harvey and included famous chefs from the East. Always available on the menu were fresh trout, venison, partridge, grouse, duck, crab, turtle, shrimp, other fowl and

(Continued on page 50)

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COME ONE, COME ALL!

A picnic scene on the South Dakota prairie, 1907

By FRED H. ROOT

Photos Courtesy Author

MOTHER was driving old Dolly. Dolly was something of a freak, a three-quarter Percheron draft mare, rather lazy but she could outrun anything in our neighborhood. And that wasn't all, she loved to race.

Brother Frank and I rode our top saddle horses decked out with a flag in each brow band. The buggy was also bedecked with flags and bunting. As we traveled, others joined us and soon it looked like a parade. Hooray for the Fourth of July!

When we arrived, we found the weeds had been mowed and hay at the campgrounds for our horses piled up for free use. A bowery dance floor had been laid, and stands set up and decorated.

The forenoon was given up to patriotic speeches, band music, and local talent singing. The kids had their part in foot races, and a real good wrestling match came off between a pair of twin boys about thirteen years old. Visiting and serving the dinner took the rest of the morning.

This was a neighborhood celebration at Manila, South Dakota.

At one p.m. a free-for-all horse race was announced by Frank Calhoon, a deputy sheriff who was acting marshal for the day. He was a big, impressive man of about thirty, well liked and fair-minded, a little on the rough order. At twenty-three he had been foreman of the M-M Ranch on Bad River, now gone out of business. Frank owned a livery barn and was doing a thriving livestock business in Midland.

The prizes were $10, $7.50, and $5.00. Brother Frank saddled old Dolly and rode up to where ten top horses were prancing around. As he rode, he was tapping her with a little stick to keep her at a trot.

Just as she reached the group of horses, she sensed a race. Her head came up and she was transformed into a race horse in every way except looks. When Calhoon shot the gun, she started fairly well and in about two seconds was leading. It was a half-mile race, too much for a fat old mare, and she lost some of her lead but still came in first. I took third place. This was good advertising for us, as we were raising quite a few horses.

The next thing on the agenda was a riding contest using a bunch of wild range mares. I drew one that looked like she would give me a run for my money. She did and I took first.

The runner-up got some liquor. He and a couple of his buddies came over and started in on me, looking for trouble. I stood it for a while, then he said things I wouldn't take and a fight started. We were banging away at each other when Calhoon rushed up, threw his arms around me, and pinned my arms down.

My adversary stepped in and gave me a hard punch in the mouth, cut my lip, and nearly knocked two teeth out. The teeth tightened up, but not for long, and I had to have them pulled later.

Calhoon stopped the fight, ordered them off the grounds, and told them not to show up at the bowery dance that night. They were afraid of Calhoon and didn't show. Calhoon apologized to me; said he had turned his head to speak to the crowd and didn't see him hit me.

Mother washed off the blood, pushed my teeth back into position, dried my gums on the outside and then cut a piece of tape to fit and taped them in. Another small piece of tape took care of my lip except for the swelling. I was trying to get in shape for the big dance but I didn't make it.

JUST as darkness was falling, three or four girls were walking from the store to the bowery. A rattlesnake buzzed and struck one girl just below the ankle. Although the girl, about fifteen, was unknown to us, Mother took charge. Mother was known as a practical nurse. The girl was an only child and her folks had gone home to milk some cows. I held her while Mother cut the wound and drained it. Then she said, "Fred, if we are going to save this girl we will have to get her to Dr. Verley's right soon. She is mighty sick right now." Dr. Verley lived at Lucerne Post Office, eighteen miles away.

There wasn't a car on the grounds but George Ackerman, four miles away, had one. I topped my horse and got to George. He had a nearly new Maxwell car with carbide lights. I put some gas in the car and George got the water dripping on the carbide tank and lit the lights.

Soon we had the girl in the back seat and were on our way. A young lady named Echo Tenney went with us. George drove and I was the pilot. Our ranch was just about half-way between Manila and Lucerne, but there was no connecting road as the post offices were on different mail routes.

Owing to our location I knew the country well. We had made five or six miles when our lights failed. The girl was wailing and vomiting. I climbed out on the broad fender of the Maxwell. It was a bright star-lit night but there was no moon.

We were following not much more than a track and had three creeks to cross. We hit everything just right and delivered the girl to the doctor.

Fortunately, he had some snake virus on hand and said he thought she would

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Fred didn't know it at the time, but this Fourth of July Picnic was going to turn his feet down the long road of the law

come along all right but her folks should come over at once.

We took Echo Tenney home, about fifteen miles out of our way. George had fixed his lights and they held out for the return trip. I retrieved my horse and thus ended the day.

It was nearly dawn when I got home. The day to me was past history, both pleasant and otherwise. The happenings seemed insignificant. However, as the months went by, I found that that Fourth of July celebration started a sort of chain reaction which changed the entire trend of my life. To some extent it effected the history of a large area of West River territory.

FOLLOWING the celebration, the country changed. A four-year drouth hit and eighty per cent of the people left their claim shacks and went east or somewhere to find at least water to drink.

We stayed on through the drouth for two reasons, I guess. One, we had a limited supply of water dipped from nine shallow wells. Two, we were products of old Dakota Territory—just couldn't break the shackles that held us.

The people changed, too, after the celebration. Wherever I went folks spoke to me. A total stranger would accost me with, "Hello! You're Fred Root, aren't you? How did the snake-bit girl come out?" Or, at another time, "Did those teeth of yours tighten up so you can use them?" Or, as one woman I didn't know said, "What became of the black work mare that turned herself into a race horse?" Wherever I went people knew me.

At the fall election our county divided. A few days after the election, a group of sixteen men came to my place and told me the county had split. I hadn't got my mail that week so it was all news to me.

Among those present was Frank A. Hart. Frank was a commissioner of the old original Stanley County, and the new county embraced just about the area of his district on almost the same lines.

Frank gave us a line-up on the procedure of organizing a new county, mainly a special election to name a county seat and elect a full set of county officials. At this special election, from a field of six, I was elected the first sheriff. Frank Calhoon was a strong opponent but he sent speedy congratulations.

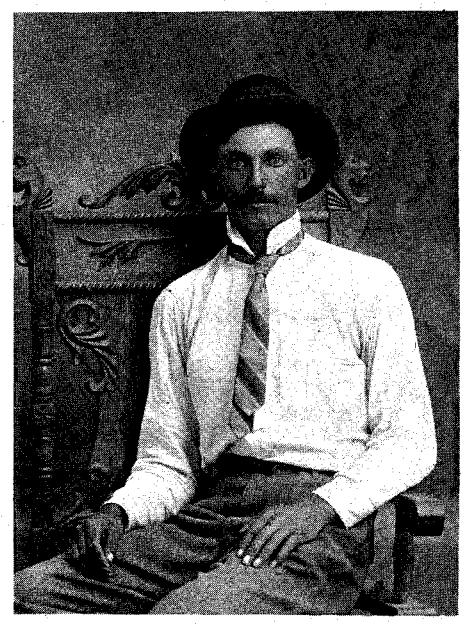
Several years later, as sheriff of the new county of Haakon, I was invited to attend another Fourth of July celebration at Midland.

I was sitting on the sidelines at the evening dance when a young lady touched me on the arm and said, "I am Margaret Ball and this is my first opportunity to thank you for saving my life." I told her the thanks should go to my mother and Dr. Verley, not me. I had completely lost track of my rattlesnake girl, never having seen her since the Manila celebration. She said they were living in Iowa and she had come out for a vacation visit.

ONE DAY I called at Frank Calhoon's ranch. It was a rough day, thirty below zero, a ground blizzard. I had driven my Model T about forty-five miles, shoveling through several drifts.

Frank met me at the door; he had a week's growth on his face and was sporting a swelled-up jaw. He was as crabby as a bear; wanted to know if I didn't know enough to stay home in that kind of weather.

I told him what I wanted. I wanted him to lend me a saddle horse and go with me to gather a bunch of horses that the bank was foreclosing. I wanted to



Fred H. Root, the first sheriff of Haakon County, in 1908

put them in his pasture, hold them ten days, and have him deliver them to Midland at the expiration of the advertising period when I would sell them at auction.

He just went up in the air over this suggestion; said I could have a horse but he wouldn't go ten feet with me. His tooth was killing him.

"That's nothing," I told him. "Why don't you pull it?"

"Can you pull it?" he snapped back.

"Sure, I can pull it if you have the nerve of a six-year-old kid."

"What will you pull it with?"

"My pliers."

Then he told his boy to go out to my car and get the pliers. I thought he was bluffing, but he wasn't.

Mrs. Calhoon was getting dinner. The boy brought the pliers and laid them on the stove to draw the frost. I put them in boiling water, then dipped my knife in the same.

Frank sat down in a chair and gripped the arms. He opened his mouth and I cut clear around the tooth. Then I took a long breath and tied on with the pliers. It was a big tooth and came hard, but I twisted back and forth, loosened it, and never let go or changed my hold until I had it out.

Then I said, "Now we are even. This tooth is as big as the two teeth that you let that big Indian knock out of me."

Frank's boy and I got the horses, about eighteen head, and put them in the Calhoon pasture.

A week later I drove down to Midland. The sale was billed for one p.m. It was a nice day. I found the horses on hay and water in the stockyards. No one was in sight so I went up to a cafe and had dinner. When I returned, quite a group was present. Calhoon stuck his head up over the fence. He was shaved and dressed up, the swelling was gone, and he was in the best of humor. He yelled, "Hello, Doc, how did you get over the operation?"

(Continued on page 63)

The original Root homestead in 1907. The author is standing at center.

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The GAMBLING SHERIFF

By E. J. THORPE

Ever try to get at the truth when a man won't talk about himself—even to refute what others say about him?

JOHNNY OWENS, like Clay Allison, was "not a gunman yet he seems to have killed more men than many a bad man made his reputation on."

An early-day sheriff of Weston County, Wyoming, his twenty-odd killings were all made on the side of the law. But his legend has become so distorted that today he is the hero of many a bizarre tale in which, if he figured at all, few of the incidents are true.

Though Johnny has been called everything from "slick, shady gambler" to "cold-blooded killer," he was in truth a quiet, well-dressed, soft-spoken man, modest to an extreme about his exceptional skills. He so deeply regretted the killings made during his years as sheriff that he refused to discuss them. Said Johnny, "Such things are best forgotten."

He gambled behind the doors of his own establishments, picked his women from the stages of his own dance halls and asked nothing but the right to live his private life as he pleased. As most people were too in awe of him to question this right, he crowded several different careers into one lifetime.

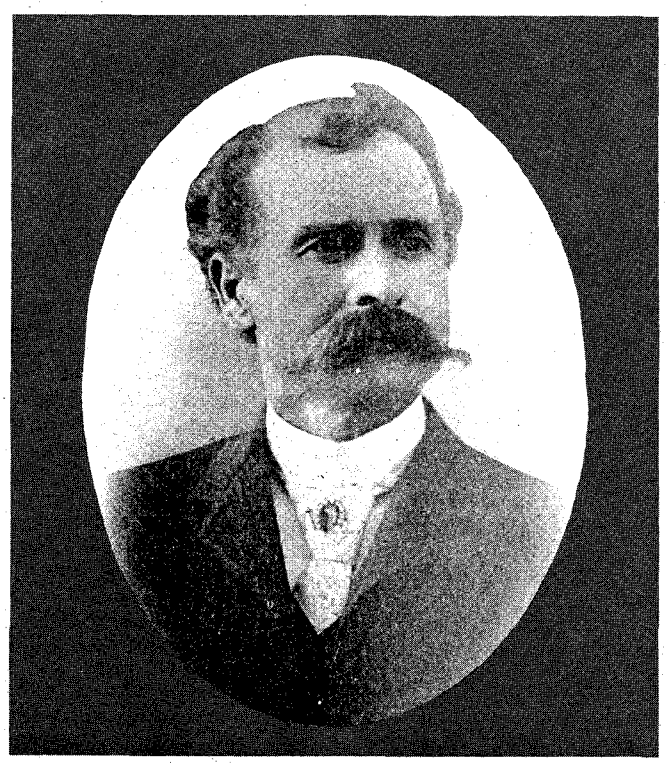
He told nothing about himself and ignored what was told about him. Because of this the facts of his early life comprise a mere skeleton to which flesh can be added only by conjecture. After 1887 when he went to Lusk, his doings are a matter of public record and are more easily followed.

Born in Marshall, Texas, August 11, 1843, Johnny was one of several children. Somewhere near the beginning of the Civil War, it is told, he was in West Plains, Missouri, helping his father take care of government horses. It was probably from here that eighteen-year-old Johnny ran off with a squad of Confederate cavalry and joined the army under General Sterling Price. He never got home again.

Though he probably spent less than two years in the army he learned some things there that never left him. When he appeared in Wyoming he was a professional gambler and one of the best pistol and rifle shots in the country.

He was captured or surrendered early in the war and either escaped to the West or was sent there as a wagontrain escort for, according to a letter he wrote a friend many years later, he "escorted lots of trains through."

COMING up the Platte River in 1863 as a scout he was wounded but "not laid on the shelf" when Indians attacked the train east of Scottsbluff. The wound healed after several weeks and in the summer of 1864 he hired out to the commanding officer of Fort Laramie as "a scout and to hunt outlaws who committed depredations upon emigrants who traveled along the Emigrant's Trail that ran along the two Platte Rivers to Salt Lake and the coast."



Courtesy Author

John Owens

This was the time of the Indian Wars. By 1866 when a peace treaty was signed reluctantly, the Union Pacific was nosing its way west. Cheyenne, Wyoming, was built ahead of the railroad and Johnny told his son that he helped lay out this city in the summer of 1867, no doubt as a member of a work crew.

Through the years Fort Laramie was Johnny's headquarters, official or otherwise, and at the fort or at any of the string of stage stations between there and Fort D. A. Russell, he could sharpen his skill at cards in his off hours. He never lacked for work, apparently, because he is known to have driven off and on for many years the stage which ran regularly between the two forts. As a stage driver he enjoyed a distinction given to few. Whether because of his prowess with guns, his impeccable manners with women or a combination of both, it was said that the officers at Fort Laramie would not let their wives plan a trip to Fort Russell or Cheyenne until they knew when Johnny was driving the stage. His reverence and respect for the opposite sex rendered him trustworthy in the eyes of their spouses and, indeed, he was never known to betray that trust.

During the winter of 1867-68 he was apparently hunting and trapping for the fort and was involved in a hair-raising skirmish with Indians at the old Rock Ranch which had been built in 1863 by a slave-owner from Missouri.

"There were nine of us at the ranch when the Indians tackled us," Johnny wrote in a letter. "Six were inside. Jessup, Alsop and Milligan were out looking after traps and saddle horses. We battled all day there. We shot only when it counted as there were about eighty of them red devils and only six of us. We buried the boys . . . they were scalped but they dropped, I think it was, 17 Indians. We

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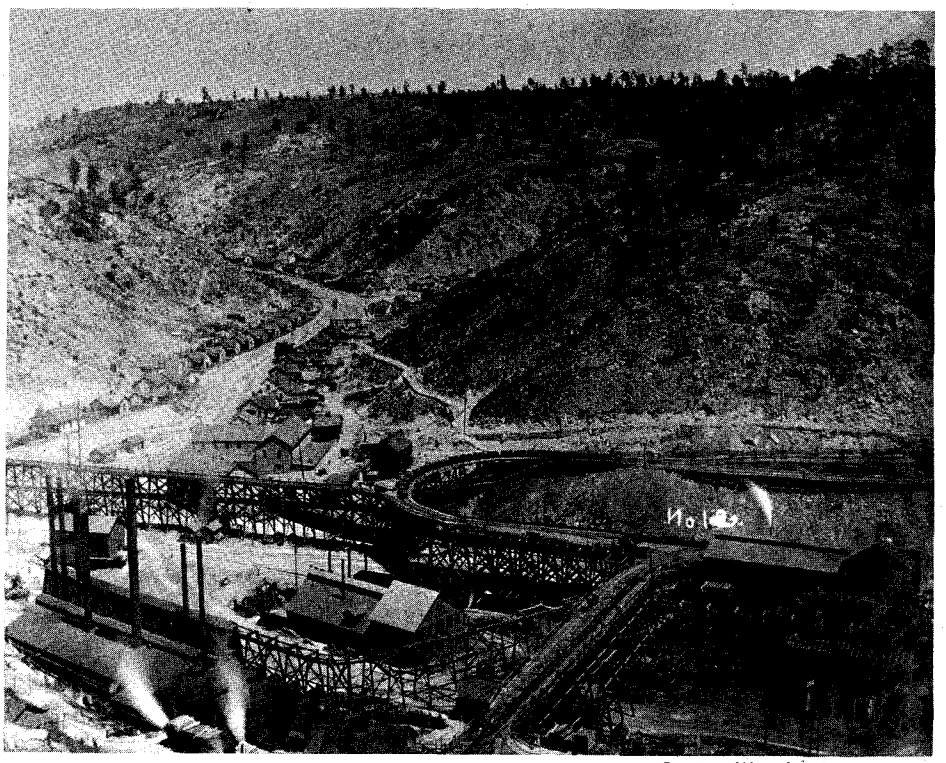
buried the Indians in the sand bar east of the Rock in a bend of the river. All our horses were taken by them and we were left afoot. We had venison, antelope meat and some coffee and corn meal. We stayed at the ranch for nearly three weeks and then two of the boys walked to old Fort Laramie at night and they sent some soldiers down after us with mules. Our saddles were stolen so we had to ride the mules bareback. We worked out of Fort Laramie and on the Chugwater all the rest of the winter." It was during this winter that Johnny and the boys found the burned wagons of what they learned later was the Cold Springs massacre.

Between 1868 and 1873 there is no record of Johnny's activities. He may have hunted for the fort or driven stage. It is possible he was proving up on homestead land and starting a ranch, for when John Hunton mentioned "Owens' ranch" in his 1873 diary it sounds as if Johnny might have been established there for some time.

John Hunton, a gentleman from Virginia who became the owner of the Bordeaux ranch and stage station in the fall of 1870, had probably begun his acquaintance with Owens in 1867 when Hunton was a clerk at the sutler's store in Fort Laramie. It is mainly through his diaries that there is any record of Johnny at all.

Typical of all Hunton's factual entries is his first mention of Johnny: "Thurs. Apr. 3, 1873—Bordeaux. Sam and I got one load of poles. Caught one beaver. George Clark returned from Cheyenne, lost 5 days. Borrowed keg of nails from John Owens. On lookout for Indians constantly. Williams saw pony tracks near lower crossing."

Never a big operator, Johnny is not mentioned among the early Wyoming ranchers and cattle barons, though Hunton is. One can only conclude that he was too small to be significant, for he was there. He gambled as hard as he worked and while no trouble ever seems to have come of it—except the loss of a wife—the most spectacular win of his professional career was a stage station!



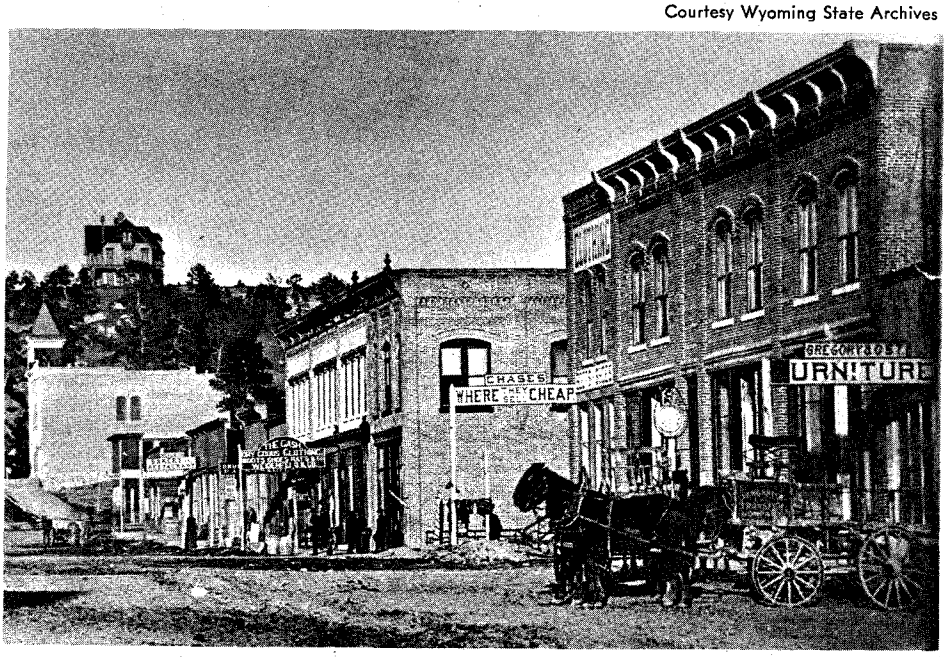
Courtesy Wyoming State Archives

Cambria, Wyoming, about 1900, showing the main street of the coal mining camp winding among the hills

Dub Meek, early freighter into the Black Hills, claimed he saw John Owens win the Chug Springs Station from Patton, who built it, in a poker game about 1876. Dub related, "At Chug Springs I made camp for the night and it was here I witnessed a most amusing incident in which Johnny Owens . . . took an active part. Owens at the time was a stage coach driver between Fort Laramie and Cheyenne. The night I camped there a big poker game was in progress in the saloon, which was owned by the man who operated the station. Owens and the owner of the station besides myself and several others sat in, but the stakes got rather high and all dropped out but the former two. The game went on between those two until nearly dawn and by that time the station master was cleaned out of everything and Johnny Owens found himself the owner of a finely stocked saloon, roadhouse and stage station. When the stage went through there that day the former landlord climbed aboard and Owens put on the white apron and proceeded to dispense choice liquors and western hospitality in a real frontier style. Owens made the former owner of the place a present of $50 for a grubstake when he pulled out."

Newcastle's main street about 1891

Courtesy Wyoming State Archives



A YEAR or two before, Johnny had met Wild Bill Hickok in Cheyenne and beat him in a shooting match. As Wild Bill was considered the king of gunfighters, California Joe (Moses El Milner) explained how this was possible. "Noted plainsmen who knew him (Bill) at his best agreed that many men could beat him at a target, but when it came to shooting at a man who was trying his best to kill him, Wild Bill had no equal."

Johnny, however, proved later that he was also at his best defending himself, and lived to see the authority of the gun dwindle. But, as he stayed in one place, his fame was confined to his corner of Wyoming and the surrounding territory. Rather than acclaim, his skill brought him eventually the angry muttering of fellow citizens that their sheriff was "too quick on the trigger."

Johnny's love life was as obscure as his first forty years, except for two laconic sentences from Hunton's dairy. The

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BIG VIC

BIG VIC was tall, almost six feet six inches, and a lumberjack friend once said he was as homely as a man could be and still live.

Vic was of that vanished occupation known as the "tie hack," one of thousands of his trade, without whom our railroads of the West could never have been built. They were the men who, with their crosscut saws and sharp axes, hewed ties for thousands of miles of track.

His height was a handicap when hewing a tree, for the men stood on top of the logs while hewing the two sides. This forced Vic to work in a bent position which in turn caused him to walk in a stooped, peculiar way. We who knew him could recognize his odd gait when he was a mile down the road.

Men who cut ties were piece workers, and put in as many hours as they cared to, sometimes as many as twelve each day. Known as "Jippos," they were a friendly class of men, good workers, free spenders, hard drinkers and very independent. This independence stemmed from their working at their dangerous trade alone. A serious cut from the sharp axes was not uncommon, sometimes only ruining their expensive calked boots, but occasionally maiming their feet. How the men survived was a mystery, for first aid kits were still unknown.

VIC HOMLUND had come to this country from his native Sweden in 1875 at the age of eighteen. He first worked in the woods in northern Wisconsin.

Following the well known Jim Hill and his Great Northern Railroad, Vic made his way to northwest Montana with the construction crews laying the original roadbed over the Rockies.

After the railroad was completed, Vic spent a few years working in the woods in Washington State but in 1914 he returned to Montana, an expert at his trade. During these years the railroads were still buying the hewed cross ties for replacement and further expansion.

Tie hacks were always in demand. They felled trees of suitable size, which were then limbed, measured, and hewed in tree lengths before being sawed into eight-foot pieces. This completed their part of the work and other help took over to move the product to the railroad sidings with horses and wagons or sleighs. Here the timbers were piled in long tiers and once a month the Tie Inspector came out to count and pay for them. The community always knew when he had "taken up" the ties, for most of the crews would be in town, right away, drinking and having a ball until their pay was squandered.

It took a lot of whiskey to quench Vic Homlund's thirst, even the moonshine variety of Prohibition days, but he never let his drinking interfere with his work. He was honest, never quarrelsome and always minded his own business, drunk or sober.

Though a bachelor all of his life, he had the greatest respect for women, regardless of their status in life, and in all the years I knew him, I never heard him utter a word against one. On only one occasion did I ever know of his getting an idea to "call" on one.

Several fellow workers were kidding Vic about the eldest daughter of one of our early homesteaders being fond of him. They told him he should go see her. The girl's father had been Vic's drinking companion at times so he got up enough nerve to make the attempt.

He procured a quart of spirits and a dollar's worth of candy in a big sack, and began the walk to the girl's home in the woods. It was a warm Sunday morning and just before reaching the house, Vic passed a nice cold spring beside the road. He sat down to rest in the shade, looking first at the water, then at the whiskey.

Our suitor lost his battle with temptation, drank the contents of the bottle and went home, giving the candy to some children he met on the way.

He was a friend of all children and one of the reasons I will never forget him —he gave me (as he did many others) my first silver dollar. He was one of the few of his trade who never were broke for Vic always quit a spending spree before this occurred. When in need, friends could always get a loan, but if they failed to pay it back, it was futile to attempt a second one.

One summer when I was about twelve, I was dragging his ties out to the wagon road where he was working. He felled a tree about a hundred feet tall which had a small hole in it. This was not uncommon and generally it ended in a couple of feet.

Vic allowed about six feet, limbed, measured, hewed the two sides, and then peeled the top of the bark. When he sawed off the culled piece, the hole was still there. He cut off two more eight-foot lengths with no more success. The air was getting blue with what I imagined were Swedish cuss words.

When Vic went to the top of the tree and sawed it off, he discovered the hole had continued through the entire length. Having lost over three hours of hard work, he sat down to rest and said to me disgustedly, "The thing was just like a rifle barrel clear to the top!"

WHEN nearing fifty, Vic bought a small tract of land, built a cabin of logs, and between jobs this was his home. Constructing log buildings took up most of his time and each was a work of art. Being a good judge of timber and an expert craftsman, many of his dovetailed corner buildings are still as serviceable as when new.

Some of his summers at this period were spent building fire lookouts for the U.S. Forest Service. The problems in building these mountaintop cabins were many, but Vic always found ways of solving them. After the logs were cut they sometimes had to be skidded long distances to the location and Vic always hewed the logs to make a flat wall on the inside. Lumber for the roofs and floors had to be packed to the mountain peaks by horses.

By World War II, the years of hard work were creeping up on Vic, and physical handicaps prevented him from doing but little of the work he knew so well. I had a sawmill at the time and knowing he badly needed money, gave him a job hewing several sets of long house-moving timbers. He would select his trees, which we would fell and move to a cleared area for him. Although much slower than in his younger days, he still did the same beautiful work and on these long timbers one could seldom find an axe mark.

By this time he had given up drinking, but it still took a box of snuff every day to keep him going. As he used firewood for fuel at his cabin, I always provided him with transportation to the woods where he cut his wood with a crosscut saw. The last few years he did this, Big Vic was so crippled that he had to work on his knees. The advent of power saws amazed him and he said if

Rivermen on the Wind River in Wyoming try to break a jam.

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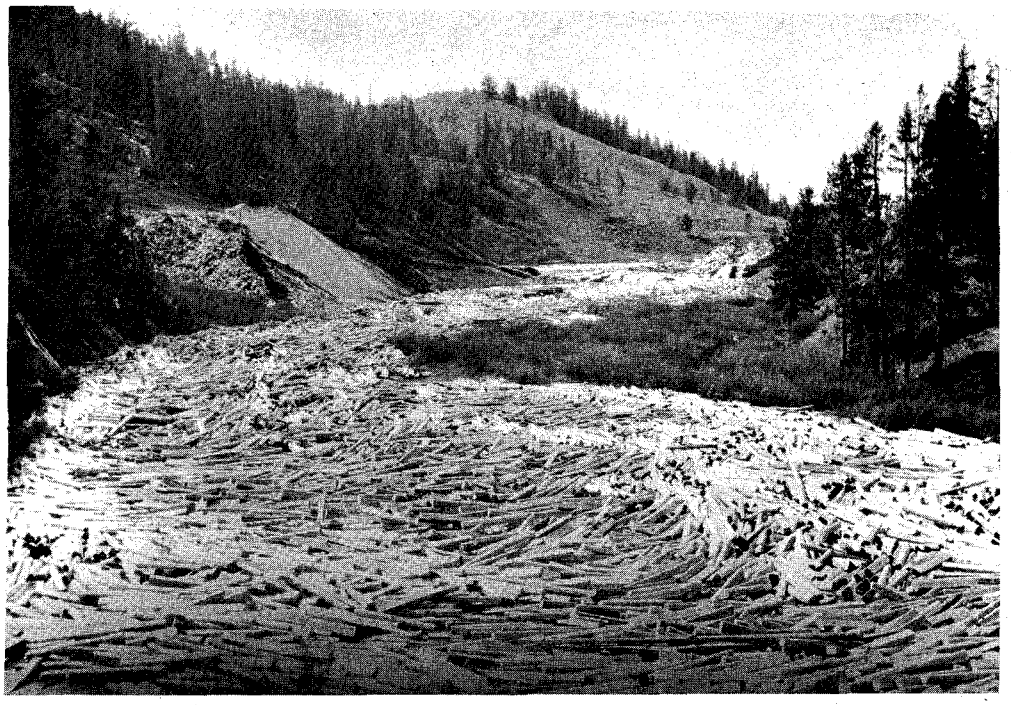

When the water is right downriver, these thousands of ties will be released under control of the skilled rivermen.

By CHARLES K. GREEN

Photos Courtesy Lee Orr

He represented all the bent backs and stout hearts that laid the tracks across the rockies . . .

of the TIE HACKS

he had had one of those things fifty years before, he would have been king of the woods.

One week end in the fall of 1947, I took Vic to the woods to cut his winter's fuel. Being so crippled, he was afraid of the power saw so I told him he could split the blocks while I sawed them. In two hours enough was sawed to fill his needs for the winter but the old fellow had only a few of the big blocks split. Sitting on one of the blocks eating his lunch, Vic shook his head sadly and said, "I never expected to live to see the day when one man could saw more wood than I could split."

AT THIS TIME there was but one job he was able to do. For two summers, we would fell big cedar trees, pull them to a level landing, saw them into lengths, then split them into fence posts. He did the work to perfection and it provided for his wants. But at the end of the second year it was apparent his good work was over.

One evening at his cabin I suggested he apply for a pension. It made him so angry he would hardly talk to me and he said he would starve before he would ever ask for charity. I told him if the Government gave him fifty dollars a month for the rest of his life they would never give him back all the liquor tax he had paid.

After getting no place in my argument, I left at midnight and the next day wrote our Social Security office, told them of the problem and requested an application be sent in my care. It took another long evening of persuading before I succeeded in getting him to sign. One evening, later that winter, he proudly showed me three $15.00 checks he had received that day in the mail.

Another neighbor and I used to look after him, for his eyesight was failing. In less than a year his doctor found it necessary to remove one eye to save his sight.

Several of his other friends and I decided to clean up his cabin while he was gone and when I took him to the hospital I talked him into giving me his keys. The next day we went to work, wiring the cabin for lights. The ladies cleaned and painted, moved in some comfortable furniture, hung curtains and did all the other things that women can do to make a home.

We still weren't finished on the second day at noon when I received a phone call from a friend in town. Vic, he said, had shown a quick recovery and would be home on the afternoon bus. We were in a quandary, for we knew the old fellow would be furious if he caught us at what we were doing. I solved this by meeting the bus, taking him to my home and telling him a big white lie about his doctor ordering him to stay overnight with me.

The neighbors worked until late, completing the renovation, and the next morning I took him home. When I opened the door to the cabin, the old man almost cried, telling me we never should have done it. I showed him how to operate the light switches, and the bedlamp which we had installed was his greatest joy.

In my long visits with him I tried to learn something about his family back in the "Old Country" as he called it. Vic had never bothered to take out citizenship papers and, as he was past eighty, it was unlikely that his folks were still living. He was the youngest of a large family. Even when he knew his end was near, he wouldn't reveal the name of anyone he cared to notify. Perhaps it was a way of the times or it could have been the result of some early family quarrel. No one will ever know.

In his last years Vic's hearing began to fail, and conversation became a burden for most of his acquaintances. My father had had a lifetime of this affliction, so I had no difficulty with him and one evening Vic said, "Sharley, it is getting so you are the only one I can talk with."

But not until his eyesight became so poor that he could no longer read the Swedish newspapers he had always subscribed to did his loneliness become pitiful. I spent whatever hours I could with him.

In the fall of 1954 it became apparent Vic would not be able to take care of himself much longer, so we arranged to admit him to our county hospital. There he had the company of older men and an occasional visit from some of us younger friends. When time and weather permitted, we would take him for a ride and one day he confided to me that he would hate to be buried in our county cemetery. I assured him this would never occur.

A few days later, I met an old friend, the former minister of our pioneer church. I told him Vic's days were numbered and asked him to officiate at the funeral when the time came. Frank said he would be glad to for the old man had helped build his first church even though he had never again been in the place.

The funeral was attended by a small group of pioneer friends and Vic was buried in a beautiful spot on a sunny spring day. As the minister said at the end of the service, "I know the big man will be happy here, for his last resting place is on a hill and under a tree."

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Wild Old Days!

'86 IN JACK COUNTY, TEXAS

By Inez Christian Doshier

RIT CHRISTIAN had settled in the middle of the Ben Cobb pasture in 1881. The Cobb range took in fifteen or twenty square miles and was fenced. Through it ran the West Fork of the Trinity River. It was on the West Fork that Christian purchased some two or three sections of broken land—a small portion of level land was cleared for farming—and with borrowed money stocked it. All might have gone well with the pioneering enterprise had not the drought of '86 proved so disastrous. Christian had two boys in their early teens, Paul and Jim, who all but lived in the saddle. They made all the round-ups through the years, meeting and associating with the ranchmen of the vicinity. But of all the experiences they had, the drought of '86 was most likely not to be effaced from their memories.

Jim's version is as follows: "The summer grew hotter and drier. The creeks and waterways above us all dried up. Cattle, thousands of them, as far west as Knox County, moved down our way as the water played out. There were no wells as there are today. The cowmen depended solely on natural waterways. The owners of these cattle were helpless to do anything but follow them. The cattle drifted in bawling herds through arid ranges, a pitiful sight! The owners with their men and wagons drifted with them. We heard they were coming and went to meet them at the west Cobb fence which was a few miles west of us.

"There must have been as many as twenty outfits. I never saw so many thin, bawling cattle before—some had not even shed their long hair.

"Newt Jones was selected boss of all the outfits. He was puzzled as to what to do. Finally it was decided to round them up. When this was done, no one wanted to cut out his stuff for he had nowhere to take it. So they still did not know what to do. When the round-up was made they estimated there were 30,000 head.

"The fence was cut and that bawling, dusty, half-starved stream of cattle poured into the Cobb pasture and all around us. Shots from guns scattered them immediately. We had had slight showers that had put water in the shallow red holes, and by those these different outfits pitched camp. We had a fifty-acre horse pasture that was fenced, with a dirt tank of water in it. We guarded our own stuff in this pasture all the time, not letting them know about the tank. All herbage and leaves had burned and fallen. There was practically nothing left for cattle to eat.

"THE RANCHMEN grew desperate and threatened to cut the east fence of the Cobb pasture and let the cattle on through to more prosperous country. Stock farmers came from Buffalo Springs and other parts east with every kind of gun I ever saw to guard the fence. They knew it meant ruination to them if the starved herds were turned in.

"Jim Loving, who had vast holdings below, gave them permission to turn in on Lost Valley. The ranchers were planning to do this the next day, but a big rain came that night and West Fork got up. The thirsty cattle once more had all they could drink, but no food. Thousands of them died—many had died all along.

"Rain came about the middle of August, and just in time to save a cattle war, for had the cattle gone into Lost Valley, many would have been pushed back up the West Fork in forbidden country. Grim-faced men carrying anything that would shoot would have met them and risked all for their herds.

"The only trouble breaking between any two people was when Newt Jones slapped Tip Burnett almost off his horse. Men sat their horses, quiet, faces set, ready for any action."

Rit Christian never recovered from the loss. Ben Cobb, a big rancher of his day, suffered ruin as did many others.

Courtesy Inez Christian Doshier

Paul and Nora Christian on the original Christian range in Jack County, Texas. Below, portrait of Jim Christian in early manhood.

MILTON BEELER, WORLD CHAMPION ROPER

By Julia B. Smith

IN 1907 when cowboys got together, they had contests in roping—before this grew into a paying game. Say, ten fellows got together, each putting ten dollars in the pot. The one who roped and

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tied the steer in the shortest time got the money.

Milton Beeler was born on his father's ranch—the site of present-day Chickasha, Oklahoma. Later, his father had business interests in Purcell, (Indian Territory, it was then). The family moved there for a while, but when Milton was still very young they came back to the ranch, starting a town, Ninnekah, seven miles south of Chickasha, at the time the Rock Island Railroad went through.

The Beeler children were at first taught by a governess, then later went to Sherman, Texas, to school and for a while Milton studied at Ft. Worth, but the call of the open was in his blood and he quit school and went to work on his father's ranch.

My brother Milton was a quiet boy, never talking much. He and Froman Grant, his cousin, of Paul's Valley, Indian Territory, would ride half a day, they laughingly said, without saying a word. He had been riding and roping since the time he learned to walk—it was a natural thing with him. He was not afraid of anything. Once, while hunting in the corn stubble, he was charged by an angry hog whose young pigs were nearby. Milton promptly shot her, saying he was not going to run from a hog. His father said he must raise the pigs, and he did feed them for a while.

One day I watched from the top of a shed, as several men roped and threw a wild horse to get a saddle on it, the horse being an especially bad one. Then Milton got on, the gate was opened, and the horse pitched all over the hillside before Fred, an older brother, rode up to take Milton off.

Father used to say Milton made the best fences of anyone on the place. When he wanted a good fence around a pasture, Milton got the job. My brother was rather small in stature, but quick as lightning and a hard worker.

In those days, when the boys roped, they roped full-grown steers, not calves. There was a field just north of our little town, a few hundred yards or maybe a half mile, where cattle had been turned on the stubble. For some reason Milton was running a steer here when his horse came upon an abandoned well and tried to jump over it. Too late, Milton saw the predicament but, ever quick, as the hind quarters of the horse went down, Milton jumped off.

There the horse was, standing on his hind legs in the well with Milton's new saddle on him. My brother ran to town, got all the men available and some strong rope. Back at the well he tied the rope around his waist and, taking more rope with him, had the men let him down into the well. All the time the horse was fighting with his front hoofs. Milton got him tied around the middle; the men then pulled the horse up and out. Someone from town had told the family before Milton came in to supper, but not a word was said about it. He just grinned.

IN THE spring of 1907 Milton entered a roping contest at Enid, Oklahoma, during a fair. He beat the time of Ellison Carroll, of Mangum, Oklahoma, who had held the World's Record in roping

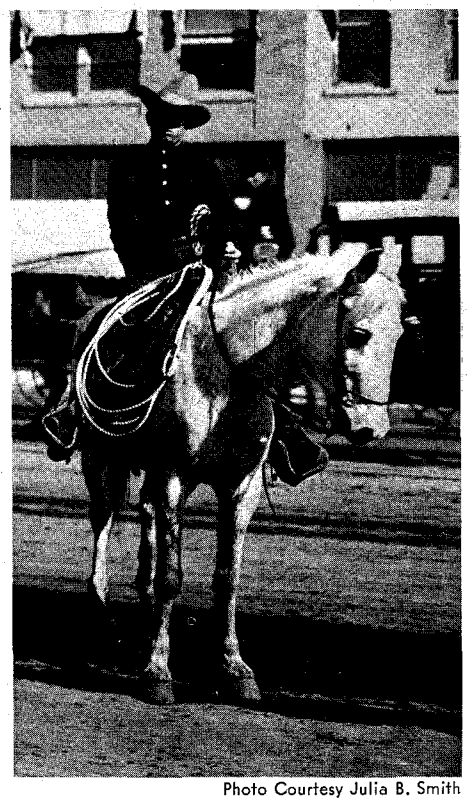

Photo Courtesy Julia B. Smith

Milton Beeler at Enid, Oklahoma

steers. *The Daily Oklahoman* reported his time as twenty seconds.

"Give my horse the credit," Milton said. The horse was an insignificant, grey cowpony, but Milton Beeler would not trade him for any other.

Milton bore his honor modestly, as always, never mentioning it at home. Then he and Fred took charge of a ranch Father owned down in the Chickasaw country, east of Sulphur and south of Roff, Oklahoma.

In the spring of 1908 the family went down there for a week. The boys didn't have a housekeeper, each taking turns at such chores, so they were very happy for Mother and me to prepare some good food for them. A family had been living at the ranch house but had left. There was a good garden and some fruit trees.

Milton watched carefully while Mother made biscuits. She made the best of everything, especially biscuits. The boys did not milk regularly but someone caught a cow and we soon had cream to churn in a jar. We even made some jelly from apples in the old orchard, and had plenty of fish from the nearby Blue River. The boys really hated to see our visit end.

The day we left, the boys were taking a herd to the railroad at Scullin for shipment, and I rode with them, helping with the cattle. The rest of the family trailed along in a buggy. Milton was never demonstrative, just walking or riding off when he got ready to leave—but that day he lingered at the station, came into the train coach and kissed us all goodbye. He was dead within the month. Just twenty-two years old.

It was July of 1908. Fred said he couldn't believe his young brother would not come to—he had seen Milton knocked unconscious so many times, had stood by to pick him up—but this time Milton's head hit a rock as the horse went down.

He hadn't wanted to rope that day, had tried to beg off when the boys got together at the small community of Pontotoc. He didn't have his roping horse but was pursuaded and finally used a borrowed horse that he knew had a weak knee. So, when he threw the rope, sure enough, the horse's knee gave way and both went down.

They worked with Milton all night but he did not move, and breath left him as the morning sun came up. He had many friends who came from distant places to pay their respects and he sleeps in the little prairie cemetery at Ninnekah on the prairie that he loved.

I have his spurs, inlaid with silver. I also have a notebook that he carried with a list of names and the money they put up. The following are the names on these lists; I wonder how many of them are still alive.

E. P. Reed .....Beggs, Oklahoma
J. E. Barker .....South Dakota
C. H. Dugger .....Beggs
John Keiser .....Pontotoc
Joe Wampley .....Tuttle
Elmore Jamison .....Connerville
Clarence Mays .....Maysville
Lonzo Williams .....Purcell
Froman Grant .....Pauls Valley
M. T. Campbell .....Chickasha
Morris Jamison .....Ardmore
Jim Vale .....Scullin
Charlie Brown .....Scullin
R. H. Lorance .....Buckhorn
Oscar Lorance .....Buckhorn
Jodie Perry .....Purcell
Will Luster .....Kingston
M. T. Holcum
Sam Hawkins
Fred Beeler
C. P. McMahan

THE FLEMISH SODDY

By Keith Barrette

WHEN their home in Belgium was reduced to rubble by German shells and bombs during World War I, John and Marie Francois fled to the United States and were given refuge by relatives in a Nebraska soddy.

Accustomed as the Francoises were to privation and hardship, they were not prepared to live out the duration in a sod house. This, at the time, seemed to them to be the ultimate in humiliation. When advised of their wartime retreat, the prospects of living in a house built of sod was tantamount to the refugees to living underground. Arrival on the Great Plains, however, changed their thinking and their preconceptions.

What the Francois family occupied is today a genuine rarity among "soddies." Located fourteen miles northeast of Broken Bow in central Nebraska, it is said to be one of the few two-story sod houses still standing in the United States. But even more unique, and that which brought tears of happiness and nostalgia to the eyes of John and Marie, is that the building's architecture is Flemish Provincial.

Isadore Haumont, a Belgian emigrant of French lineage, built this particular four-room home during 1881-82 and in it raised his family. The house has two large rooms upstairs and two of equal

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Courtesy Keith Barrette

A recent picture of the Flemish soddy. The walls were covered with lumber by a later occupant, but the round, turret-like corners, showing sod construction, remain exposed.

size downstairs. The kitchen is an attached lean-to. Distinguishing it from other soddies are its round, turret-like corners—"wagon wheel corners," in local terminology.

Pere Haumont was an artisan, imaginative and meticulous. He not only installed such added details as a clock shelf in every room, but embellished them with carving, as he did the window and door frames. The doors were all done in parquetry. Two closets, one on each floor, are six by nine feet in dimension.

At present, the east wall is pulling away from the rest of the building and unless steps are taken to restore it, this fine example of "Great Plains Architecture" is destined to be lost within the next few years.

The property has passed from father to son, to grandson. Joe Haumont, the son, added siding to the exterior in 1930. The present owner is Henry Haumont, the grandson, whose contemporary home abuts the eighty-odd-year-old soddy.

This Flemish house has survived two cyclones and numerous hail storms. It has been vacant since 1932 which marked the demise of the Francois family.

Genuine sod houses are difficult to find on the midwestern scene today. Their scarcity is considered sufficient to warrant the erection of a replica at the Pioneer Village at Minden, Nebraska. True, there are a few left standing, but the majority have been enclosed with wooden siding or lime plaster by latter-day owners, as a means of preservation. As a result, these unique dwellings of the Era of Expansion are not readily identified. Others have been allowed to disintegrate until only one or two walls of the originals remain.

THE VERY nature of the building material suggests griminess and dirt-ridden living. To the stranger, the idea of a soddy was repugnant. A story is told of a teacher from "the East" who was horrified when he learned that his quarters during the Nebraska school term would be in a sod house. He fairly blanched at the thought of his fine clothes, books and food being subjected to a constant barrage of sifting and falling dust and fine dirt. His resistance came to an abrupt and happy conclusion when he stepped into the soddy for the first time.

It was a five-room dwelling with wooden floors. Its parlor was graced by a grand piano, together with other shining, spotless furniture and an Axminster carpet. Not only that, the teacher's room was airy, neat and clean with white sheets on the bed and not so much as a film of dust anywhere. A wide, high window kept his room well lighted.

Mrs. Indah Brown of Oconto, Nebraska, who was born in a soddy about a decade after Isadore Haumont had completed his masterpiece, has gathered considerable and valuable details relative to soddies. She has supplied the following information:

Only two kinds of sod were suitable for construction—that produced by buffalo or bunch grass, and the other called "big blue stem." The root systems of these two varieties are sufficiently complex to bind the black, midwestern soil into a compact sod, heavy enough to have a staying quality.

A plow was used to cut the sod into strips, twelve inches wide, to a depth of about four inches. Knives set in a frame, drawn by a horse, re-cut the strips into lengths of from thirty to thirty-six inches.

Walls of the soddy were made by laying up the sod strips crosswise, making the walls thirty or more inches thick, depending on the length of the strip. The only wood used in the construction was for door and window frames, floors and roof timbers, and not all had wood floors. The windows were set flush with the outside surface, giving additional room to the inside, since these window ledges were deep enough for a seat or an emergency cupboard.

The roof was normally slanted, but rarely peaked. Many builders covered the rafters with a layer of tar paper before roofing the dwelling with a thickness of sod.

A few builders carried this method one step further by raising a gabled roof over the sod. Others roofed their soddies with corrugated metal and some even had shingled roofs.

The interiors were finished with plaster, also of native material. This consisted of a mixture of heavy clay and fine "canyon sand" found near the sites. Sometimes the exteriors were sealed with a coat of this same material to slow erosion.

All soddies had one characteristic: they were cool in summer; easily heated in winter. The cook stove in the kitchen usually provided central heating, but a few had additional appliances such as a small stove or fireplace in the living room.

Soddies were built of necessity, not through design. When the first settlers moved in, lumber was either at a premium or nonexistent. Covered wagons were neither durable nor permanent. The genius who discovered the sod in the bottoms of grassy draws, called "canyons" by Nebraskans, is an unsung hero of the pioneers.

My Thirty Years as a Pulp Writer

(Continued from page 9)

the Creator of mankind from Whose mold I was made whole and unblemished. The following morning I found Les Zurner loading the rural mail into his pickup, and gave him my answer.

"Tell that millionaire to get another boy." And I handed over the large envelope, thus ridding myself of the dead albatross.

I learned later that an Australian fighter agreed to this proposition for the same price offered me plus a one-way steamship ticket to Sydney. The operation was a total failure and a lawsuit ensued.

As I read the news account of the charges, the dread feeling came that I was reading the obituary of a fine athlete. And that there, but for the grace of God, went I. It was an eerie feeling like someone had just walked across my grave.

Now for the first time, I have set it down on paper as a milestone of sorts in the hard school of rejection slips.

MEANWHILE it was on my daily trips to the Del Mar post office that I met Lee Shippey, a newspaperman and war correspondent recently returned from France. It was an informal introduction of comparing rejection slips that marked the beginning of a lifetime friendship. Shortly after that meeting, Lee went to work for the Los Angeles *Times* and for many years had his own column, "The Lee Side o' L.A."

Lee Shippey was there at the Del Mar post office when, instead of a returned manuscript, I was handed a letter with "Munsey Publications" stamped on the left-hand corner of the envelope. It was from the then famous editor, Bob Davis, acknowledging receipt of a short story I'd sent to *Argosy* entitled "The Peace

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Treaty of the Seven Up." The letter stated that *Argosy* had accepted the story and would pay me $25 for it, but being an unknown author they would require some identification.

After two long years of negative reports, it is well nigh impossible to find words to express my emotions that day. I was sitting on top of the world. I'd finally at long last made the grade. I was too choked up to trust my voice as I handed the letter to Lee Shippey to read, and that kindly newspaperman, with his deep understanding of human nature, read my thoughts and shared my unbounded happiness as he shook hands and thumped me between the shoulder blades. I felt like hollering the glad tiding out loud, doing an Injun war dance, but instead I stood tracked, grinning like a first grader with a gold star on his report card.

Lee Shippey explained that the reason *Argosy* needed identification was because frustrated writers had been known to copy verbatim another author's published story. Suddenly I remembered Bob Horton who had sold stories to Munsey and could identify me. I loped back to the power house and knocked out a letter to Bob on the old second-hand Oliver.

The following is quoted from the letter Bob Horton wrote to Robert H. Davis of Munsey's, dated Great Falls, Montana, March 25, 1922:

"My friend, Walter J. Coburn, of Del Mar, California writes me that he has sold you people a story and given me as reference. All I can say is that he's been trying for a year and a half and I'm surprised he didn't break in before. He's O. K. His father owned the largest cattle outfit in Montana in the days when it was a cattle state. Walter rode the range when it was good—and he's still young. I've read some of his stuff and when his characters talk range talk they spill the genuine thing. If anybody is entitled to write western stories he is, and I hope he climbs to the top of the grade."

Selling my first story was all I needed by way of encouragement. In my bonehead cowpuncher ignorance I firmly believed I had it made. The sun had risen on my success. But it was a false dawn, because it was about six months before I sold my next story to *Western Story Magazine*, a Street & Smith publication. I then received a letter from the editor, F. E. Blackwell, wanting to see another story of mine, as if he hadn't read the dozen or more stories that had come back from *Western Story* with a printed rejection slip—and maybe he hadn't. There was the odd chance the returned manuscripts had been looked over by his staff of readers and turned down. Anyhow, F. E. Blackwell bought my next story, a novelette of 12,000 words, for a cent and a half a word.

That put me in the chips. I quit my job at Del Mar and headed for Santa Barbara, renting a small cottage with a fireplace and a vine-covered porch near the old mission. By then I was selling enough stories to pay the rent and buy grub.

In a moment of desperation I'd signed up with one of several correspondence schools teaching short story writing. I paid them five dollars a month and sent them manuscripts for criticism, then I sent the corrected manuscripts out to different pulp magazines. All came back home to roost. I still owed the school fifty dollars when I moved to Santa Barbara and the books on short story writing were on a bookshelf in the living room when I received a telegram from Bob Horton that he was due to arrive in Santa Barbara on a certain day. I was to meet him at the train, and I did.

IT WAS during the Prohibition era. I had bought a pint of prescription whiskey at the drug store. A pound of round steak, a few potatoes and a can of corn. That was about all I could afford during the lean years.

During the time I'd known Bob Horton in Great Falls when he was sports editor for the *Tribune*, he was always a fancy dresser, in tailored suit and well barbered. The last word I'd gotten from him he said he was batching in a log cabin at Logging Creek, Belts, Montana, to "get atmosphere" when the first snow fell for a story he was writing entitled "Till the Wolves Come Home."

He'd enclosed a snapshot of himself in long wool sox and high laced boots and flannel shirt, and those were the exact clothes he wore, plus a mackinaw coat and woolen cap with the earflaps tied up, when he stepped off the day coach in Santa Barbara. He needed a haircut and a shave and looked for all the world like a lanky lumberjack who was dead broke and hung over. And that is exactly how he was, down to the loose change in the pockets of a soiled pair of army issue riding breeches, with a sprinkling of gray in his untrimmed hair. His only baggage was a large brown paperbag that held a Gillette razor and shaving stick, a toothbrush and tube of paste, and a new pair of long wool sox and a union suit. His long-legged stride was a cocky swagger and he had a grin on his lantern-jawed face with its three-day's stubble of wiry whiskers. There was an amused sardonic twinkle in his eyes.

About a month before, Bob Horton had sent me a wire announcing his arrival, with instructions to reserve a suite of front rooms for him at the expensive Samarkand Hotel, but he had failed to put in an appearance. Now here he was a month later. It was a chilly day in November when I took him to my small rented one-bedroom cottage. I built up the fire in the fireplace and broke the seal on the pint of whiskey. Horton had the habit of walking the floor when he related one of his colorful stories. I was in the kitchen peeling spuds for pan frying, and now and then I'd come into the living room and we'd have a drink.

As Bob paced the floor he would toss something into the fireplace and a blaze would flare up, but I paid no attention until in passing the bookcase I saw his gesturing long arm flick out and toss one of the correspondence school paperbound books into the fire.

"What the hell are you doing, Bob? I still owe $50 on those books!"

"Trash!" Bob spoke contemptuously for

(Continued on next page)

If you have information concerning persons referred to below, do not write to us. Communicate directly with the letter writer.

Doan or Doane

I wish to know of historical points of interest and spots that have had to do with my family Doan, or sometimes Doane. I would appreciate a list and some facts concerning these. We have a family reunion biannually and it falls this year.

Formerly they were held only on Cape Cod but last year we met at Doane College near Lincoln, Nebraska. I know only of Doan's Crossing and the frontier store.—Mrs. Lucy Doan Graham, RFD #3, Trenton, Missouri 64683.

David Fox

If you will print the following in your magazines, it might take a weight off my conscience.

In 1903 I met an Indian by the name of David Fox on a freight-train going to Kansas City. He was twenty-four years old and I was twenty. We worked and traveled together for about two months. After that we separated.

He went to his home, five miles east of Muskogee, Oklahoma, where Cody Creek crosses the Gooseneck road, while I worked on a steel-gang on the M. K. and T. Railroad. During that time I visited him twice but the third time I tried to see him, his mother, a widow, informed me that he was in prison at Fort Gibson and she did not know what crime he was charged with.

The U. S. Marshal at Muskogee refused to give me that information and he also refused to give me a pass to see him. I had to give up. The letters I wrote to his mother were returned marked "unclaimed." His last words to his mother were that I would do more for him than anyone else. That hurt me more than anything. The several letters I wrote to the U. S. Marshal, asking for an explanation, were simply ignored. Perhaps one of your readers can give me some information about David Fox. He would be eighty-eight years old now and I would sure be happy if he is still living.—Albert (Buckshot) Enzmann, 5729 Shady Lane, Paradise, California 95969.

Walthall Cemetery

It was 106 years ago that the little communities of Pickettville and Walthall were settled about eight miles east of the present town of Ballinger, Texas. We have a distant cousin buried at Walthall Cemetery—Penny Coffey, first wife of

(Continued on page 54)

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he consigned the rest of the unpaid for pamphlets to the flames. "Trash!" he repeated. "You don't need any damnfool books to teach you how to write. That correspondence school outfit's got you on the sucker list."

"I still owe them fifty bucks. I signed some sort of an agreement. I've already paid them fifty bucks."

"And how many of their corrected manuscripts have you sold?" Bob quirked a lifted eyebrow in my direction.

"They all came back to roost."

"You're out fifty bucks." Bob put on a crooked grin. "As P. T. Barnum once remarked. 'There's a sucker born every minute.'" He tossed down a shot of liquor.

I GOT Bob Horton a room at a good rooming house. Went good for his meal tickets at a restaurant where I was acquainted. I rented him a typewriter in my name, and in three weeks time he had finished writing a 35,000 word story. When he mailed it out he instructed the editor to wire him the money.

During those three weeks he wore the same outlandish lumberjack mackinaw and high-laced boots and wool cap with the flaps tied up. One afternoon when I went over to his rooming house the landlady informed me that Mr. Horton had paid his rent and moved out. A strange man of eccentric habits, the good woman confided as she told how she had accompanied him to the Western Union office to identify him so he could obtain the money the editor had wired him. In return for the favor Mr. Horton had had two dozen American Beauty roses and a five pound box of candy delivered to the house by special messenger. She proudly showed me the card signed Robert J. Horton, Author of "Outlaw Code." It was the title of the story he had written in three weeks.

Bob Horton had paid his bill at the restaurant, returned the typewriter and squared his account for rental and stationery, and boarded the train. It was typical of old Sporticus that he left without bidding me goodbye.

A month or more passed without word from him. I figured he had gone back to Montana or New York. In spite of the fact that I was long since accustomed to his odd habits of negligence I was a little hurt by his strange disappearance.

I'd formed the habit of working mornings and going to the beach every afternoon for a swim regardless of the weather, to keep in good physical condition. I'd located a deserted stretch of beach in the sand dunes near the exclusive Montecito Estates and near a lake and bird refuge. A secluded spot where I could change into a bathing suit.

Once while Bob was in Santa Barbara I had picked him up and he had spent the afternoon at the lake, watching the waterfowl and other birds. He had brought along a thick illustrated volume on bird life and a note book. That evening after supper at my cottage he took an almost childish delight in quoting off-hand the scientific names for mallard and teal ducks, jack-snipes and sandhill cranes and various and sundry waterfowl, along with lectures on migration, nesting habits, and so on.

One evening a month or two after Bob had left Santa Barbara without saying goodbye, I had finished my swim about sundown and was headed for town in the flivver along the sparsely traveled Channel Drive when I heard the blaring sound of one of those fancy lah-de-dah French horns, the kind expensive automobiles were equipped with. It was a superior snooty summons to make room, get the hell over. Even though I was on my own side of the road and the Ford was chugging along at the edge of the speed limit with no traffic ahead, that high-toned horn kept up its imperious summons.

In the beatup rear view mirror I got a look at the long, brightly polished black hood of a big Packard car, with a large nickel-plated radiator cap in the replica of a winged Statue of Mercury. A liveried chauffeur, with cap and goggles, was doing the driving. I figured the car belonged to some Montecito millionaire, driven by a very arrogant chauffeur, and to hell with him and his fancy horn! I tooted back in answer to his road-hog challenge and kept on going. A few minutes later the big Packard overtook me and instead of passing kept alongside, crowding me over toward the sandy shoulder. I had my mouth open to holler an insult at the driver when I caught a brief glimpse of the man in the back seat.

A TALL FIGURE in tailored pin-stripe blue suit and derby hat, sat stiff-backed with both gloved hands on a polished walking cane. And so help me Hannah, he had a monocle screwed up in one eye. One quick look at that long cadaverous face was all I needed to know that it was the one and only Robert J. Horton. I drove the flivver off the pavement and pulled up.

"Drive that rattletrap into the lake, old chap, and leave it in the mud," Bob Horton instructed me in a haughty London House of Lords accent, poker faced, without a sideways glance. The silk cord of the monocle hung alongside the white carnation in the buttonhole of his tailored coat. His creased trousers were pulled up to show the pearl gray spats, and his chamois gloved hand waved the walking stick imperiously. I couldn't help thinking that Broadway had lost a ham actor when Horton turned his talents to newspaper and fiction writing.

There he was. Old Sporticus, dressed to the nines, riding in a custom-made Packard, with a uniformed chauffeur. And me in faded levis and a pair of old beat-up tennis shoes. The top was down on the old flivver I called Calamity Jane, and a damp bathing suit hung from the radiator cap to dry. But what the hell! I was healthy and full of beans and making a living putting words on paper. I had the world by the tail with a downhill pull.

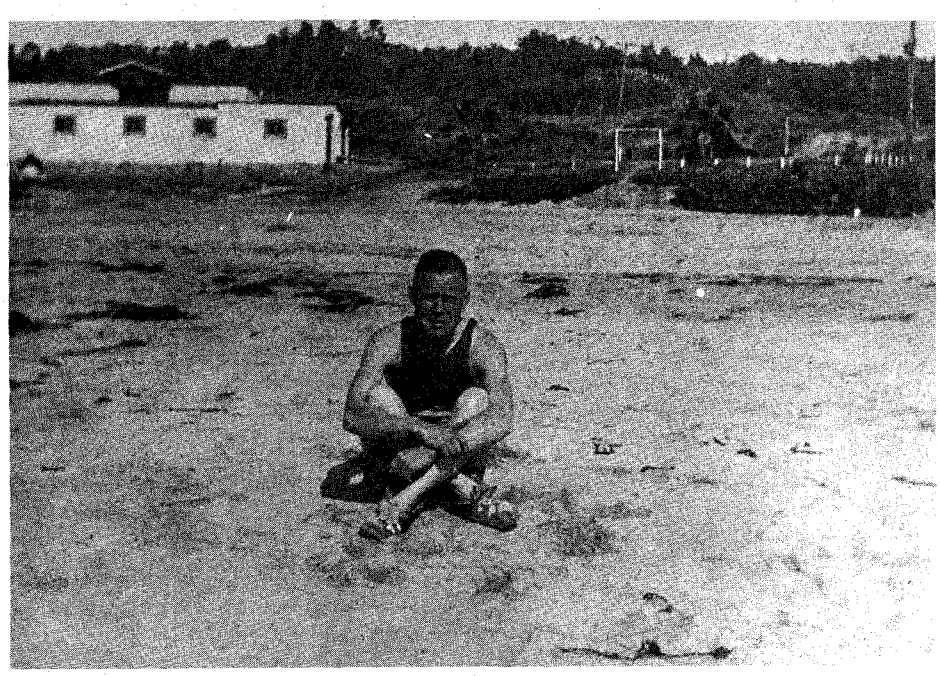
"It's open season," I grinned, "for glass-eyed sandhill cranes." I pointed to the sign, BIRD REFUGE. "Tell your keeper in the monkey suit he'd better camp here at the frog pond. As long as you keep within the confines of the bird refuge you'll be fairly safe from the snipe-hunters."

"I have a reservation at the King's Rest Court." Sporticus announced haughtily. "Cottage Number One. My man Giles will prepare dinner promptly at seven-thirty. Cocktails at six. I'd advise a hot bath to rid you of barnacles and surplus sand. I'll expect you promptly at the cocktail hour, old bean. Drive on, Giles, and don't spare the horses."

All this was spoken as he stared straight ahead, the sunlight reflected on the polished lens of the monocle, Sporticus playing the role of Prince and myself the ignoble part of Pauper.

The newly constructed King's Rest Court was a plush expensive tourist attraction in the mountain foothills near the old mission, within easy walking distance of my humble cottage.

Walt Coburn on Del Mar, California, beach when working as part time lifeguard



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I showered and shaved and donned a new pair of gray flannels, a lightweight navy blue crew-necked pullover sweater, Argyle dark blue and white sox and buckskin oxfords, recently purchased at the Sport Shop. They took a sizeable bite out of the check I got from Street & Smith the previous week. I timed my arrival promptly at six to humor my whimsical friend.

The front door of Cottage One was partly open when I arrived. There in the living room, with its heavy oak furniture, was Sporticus in white flannels, open-necked white shirt, and two-toned shoes, pacing the carpeted floor, a highball glass in one hand, a manuscript in the other from which he was reading aloud. He waved me in with the highball glass, motioning toward a table that held a bowl of cracked ice and a bottle of bootleg Scotch.

He resumed reading aloud, reciting the dialogue, gesturing as he mimicked the voices of the different characters as he paced back and forth, and paying me no attention. I had long ago become accustomed to the peculiar antics of old Sporticus, for as far back as his newspaper days he was always acting a part.

A tentative taste of the Scotch of some unknown brand proved palatable and I gulped it down, and helped myself to a refill.

Bob Horton let out a loud snort of disgust and tossed the manuscript in the wastebasket. "Ruined!" he exclaimed. "A pox on that script writer in Hollywood for spoiling an excellent story. Little did I think when my Hollywood agent sold the story that I was selling the murder rights!"

Bob gulped down the rest of his highball and dropped some ice into the glass and splashed in the Scotch. Then there was a grin on his face and a humorous spark came into his eyes as he quoted, "'The time has come,' the Walrus said, 'to speak of many things—of ships and shoes and sealing wax, of cabbages and kings. . .'

"I've dismissed Giles for the night so you and I can talk," he told me.

That was a memorable evening, never to be forgotten, as we sat in deep armchairs and talked of old times and future dreams.

I smoked my pipe and Bob smoked his Turkish cigarettes as we worked on the Scotch. The ice box was filled with cold cuts of ham, turkey and rare roast beef, salads of all kinds, and a large bowl of home-cured olives.

BOB HORTON brought me up to date as we drank and ate. He said he'd spent the money he had gotten for the novelette on several suits of tailor-made clothes and bootleg whiskey. Broke and in debt from his stay at the Los Angeles Ambassador, he'd wound up in jail, in company with Willie Giles, the bellhop and bootlegger at the hotel. He had served five of his ten days before his Hollywood agent finally located him, the bearer of good tidings that he'd sold two of Bob's stories to the studios for a handsome figure. Bob had bailed out Willie Giles, bought a second-hand Packard and fitted Giles out with a chauffeur's uniform at a place where they rented costumes. Giles was his valet and chauffeur and traveling companion.

Bob said he was going on to San Luis Obispo to utilize the hot mineral baths, to boil out the nicotine, alcohol and jail stink. Then he'd go back to Los Angeles, sell the car and board the train for New York. From there he was going on a trip to Europe, and propositioned me to go along. We could write our stories abroad and live the life of Riley. Bob Horton was in the chips and, while it was whiskey talk, he meant every word he said. He sure made a tempting offer, but while I had less than fifty bucks in my bank account I wasn't about to live off any man.

But with us both well into our cups and enjoying a celebration, I wasn't going to spoil it by any drunken argument. Nor did I make mention of the fact that I was moving to Carmel, California, right away.

Bob Horton departed the following day. The day after, I climbed aboard Calamity Jane and headed for Carmel. On the way I stopped at San Luis Obispo and left a letter for Bob at the hotel, and drove on north.

That memorable evening at Santa Barbara when we talked of cabbages and kings until daybreak was destined to be our last get-together. The parting of our trails. I never saw my old friend Sporticus again.

The following is quoted from a letter I received from F. E. Blackwell, Editor of *Western Story Magazine*, dated August 23, 1927:

"Dear Coburn: Your friend, Bob Hor-

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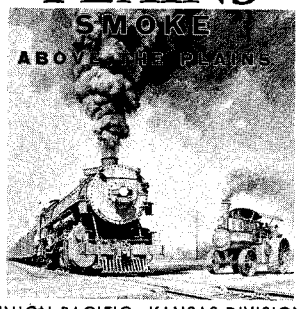

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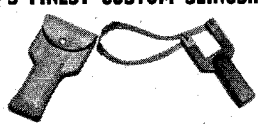

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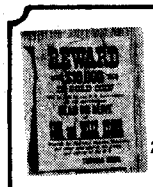

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ton, shook hands with me last Friday in a wild state of excitement. A child going to the circus is nothing to him. He was off on the *Leviathan* Saturday. I think his feelings were hurt because I was going to be out of town and wouldn't be there to wave him good-by. Bob is a good scout and loyal to the core. He has just finished a very good serial for me, and has promised to do some work on the other side. It's a wonder to me that the liquor hasn't done him up long ago. For years I have been saying, 'Well, this is the end, he will never be able to do another story.' Now, however, after having seen him bob up serenely after frightful and terrifying experiences in frightful and terrifying places, I say that he is one man I don't understand."

I RECKON Bob had been dead for a year or more before I got the word from a mutual friend, Steve Doyle of Great Falls. Steve Doyle, now gone to his own reward, was cashier at the Stanton Bank. He'd once loaned Horton five hundred dollars on the strength of a synopsis of a story, and Bob had paid off the thirty-day note on due date.

Steve in his letter told me of the time when Horton, then sports editor for the *Tribune*, tubercular looking to start with, had come down with a touch of pneumonia that had left him with a racking cough. Bob quietly spread the word that he was dying of quick consumption, a deadly disease, with the result that the newspaper took up a collection. Alex Warden, the owner and editor donated a hundred bucks. Others kicked in. Sid Willis, owner of the Mint Saloon, and Billy Rance of the Silver Dollar, Cut Bank Brown and Highnote of the Maverick, generously fed the kitty. Other saloon men and gamblers sweetened the pot. Abe Nathan of Nathan's Clothing Store and Mose Kaufman of the Red Front Clothing Store vied with one another in their generosity.

When Alex Warden, with a fitting speech, presented the surprised (?) Horton with a ticket to California and a fat bank account sufficient to last the winter in the balmy south, Sporticus wept and sobbed aloud, coughing into his handkerchief that came away from his mouth with tell-tale crimson spots.

Later Horton confided to Steve Doyle that the crimson stains came from a small vial of red ink palmed in the white linen handkerchief.

Thus Sporticus, wetting his cigarette cough with Tia Juana liquor, lived it up in San Diego, supplementing his depleting T.B. grubstake with money earned as waterfront reporter for the San Diego *Sun*, a Scripps-Howard newspaper.

News of the costly hoax trickled back to the owner of the Great Falls *Tribune* in devious and sundry ways from time to time. Alex Warden was wont to relate it often in later years as a good joke on himself.

An edge of sadness dwelt in the pages of Steve Doyle's letter. I had lost not only an old friend and drinking companion, but the man who had given me the courage I so sorely needed to start and continue my writing career. Bob Horton had followed the ghostly rider on the pale horse into the darkness, without my knowing it. I heard later that he had died at sea aboard a homeward bound steamship, and that relatives in New England had buried him, but a shroud of mystery seemed to cloak his untimely death.

In spite of Bob Horton's infectious gaiety, his dry humor and play-acting, there was an unfanthomable aura of loneliness and sadness in his being. His was a keen brilliant mind with a flair for genius. His zest for living had its moments of probing the black depths of despair, though few who knew the man were aware of it. Bob Horton had a gallant sort of courage that he carried like a banner throughout his life.

"The dedicated life of a writer," Bob once said, "is a life of loneliness."

No truer words were ever coined.

IT WAS about 1924 that I began to hit my stride, batting out 2,000 words a day, six days a week, playing the field as a free lance writer.

J. B. (Jack) Kelley, co-publisher with J. W. Glenister, and editor of the Fiction House chain of pulp magazines, visited me in Santa Barbara where I was then living. We had a long medicine talk over a bottle of Irish whiskey. Jack offered me three cents a word and the feature story each month in *Action Stories Magazine*, with my name topping the list on the cover.

I took a strong liking to Jack Kelly when I first met him and we shook hands. And I reckon the feeling was mutual, because that day a strong friendship was made that lasted until his untimely death in 1932.

From our first meeting, Jack Kelly took me in tow. "I'll build you up, cowboy," he promised, "until you'll be the highest paid western writer in the game. In due time we'll use that as a springboard for the slick magazines. So keep your head in the stars and your feet on the ground."

I'd been writing under my full name, Walter J. Coburn. It was Jack Kelly who told me to write under the by-line of Walt Coburn. And so that I would have no pressing financial worries, Fiction House, at Jack Kelly's suggestion, sent me a check for $100 every week. At that time I was doing a 25,000 word novelette for *Action Stories* each month, and at the first of each month I was paid the difference between the $750 I received for the story and the weekly checks. And Jack Kelly kept his word about giving me the lead story and the cover on every issue.

In 1925 when Fiction House started publishing *Lariat Story Magazine*, Jack Kelly sent me an original Will James etching, a prized possession, with the following inscription:

> "This drawing by Will James illustrated 'Riders of the Purple' by Walter J. Coburn. The first story in the first issue of *Lariat Story Magazine*. It is presented to Walt Coburn by the Editor of *Lariat* with his warmest good wishes and in a spirit of respect to a great teller of great stories. Signed J. B. Kelly 9-24-25."

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Another one of my prized possessions is a telegram I received from Jack Kelly, dated New York, April 1, 1931, which read as follows:

"Your last yarn voted best from your typewriter in a year Stop As Lincoln said of Grant's drinking I would like to send a barrel of your whiskey to a lot of our writers. Signed Jack Kelly."

In 1929 Fiction House paid all expenses for me and my wife, Pat, to attend the Calgary Stampede and they footed the bill for a trophy I presented to the North American Champion Bronc rider, Pete Knight, a beautiful engraved stop watch. In 1931 Fiction House paid all our expenses for a ten-day trip to New York City as the guests of Jack and Laura Kelly. On a few occasions he paid my expenses for a trip to Baja California to gather material. He claimed that all work and no play was bad medicine for a writer, and those trips sure paid off in the border yarns I batted out later.

During the years from 1924 to 1932 I wrote regularly for *Action Stories, Action Novels, Lariat Story, North-West Stories* and *Frontier Stories*—all Fiction House pulps. In 1931 Fiction House also published a magazine called *Walt Coburn's Action Novels* which used reprints of four Walt Coburn stories. On the cover was my picture "The Cowboy Author" and opposite it "I read all of Walt Coburn's stories—Will Rogers." The cover was done by artist Joe De Yong, and the story heads by Will James, T. A. Tinsley and George H. Wert.

Jack Kelly believed in plenty of publicity blurbs and ran special features from time to time in the newspapers and magazines such as the following:

"Walt Coburn, one-time Montana cowpuncher, has established a new story writing record. For 60 consecutive months, representing that many magazine issues, a Walt Coburn adventure story of the West has been published in *Action Stories*. Fiction House, Inc. publishers of *Action Stories* announces that this performance shatters all previous records for successful story writing. Walt Coburn, a familiar figure at rodeos, is the son of Bob Coburn whose Circle C outfit will be remembered by the old-timers. Some of them, thinly veiled, play vigorous parts in Walt's true-to-life stories of the old days of the West."

Another publicity blurb read as follows:

"Of western story writers there is no end. They are as common as Democrats in Texas. Many of them learned their locale from a Pullman window; some of them just sat down to a typewriter and got it all from a package of cigarettes. You will not have to read many pages of this magazine to appreciate that Walt Coburn is the real McCoy. Montana is his home state and old-timers still talk of the Coburn Circle C spread where Walt, boy and man, wrangled horses and punched cows before the days of barb wire. Perhaps you have read Walt Coburn before, but, man, if this is your introduction to this high ridin' cowboy's stories, how we envy the thrill of your discovery. Walt Coburn's story people are the hard-living, hard-dying breed who built an empire—who wrote pages of high courage in American history. Walt Coburn is of them and one of them."

Just two samples of the publicity Jack Kelly fed to the reading public with a lavish hand. I know if it had been in the cards and he had lived, his help and encouragement would have carried me on to greater things in the writing game.

His sudden death was a gutshot. The bond of friendship between us was stronger than any blood-brother ties. For Jack Kelly's rare understanding of this man had long since become a part of my being. He was the finest friend I ever had. As grand an Irishman as ever gave a writer a leg up the long ladder. Memories still linger of our talks together at Del Mar, California, where I had built a home in 1929. Where Jack learned how to wrap up a Bull Durham smoke, the day he carved his initials on the double bunk at the whitewash clapboard shack I worked in. Where we planned a trip to Ireland together, the birthplace of my grandparents.

It was at my home in Del Mar on April 4, 1932, that I received a telegram from Laura Kelly announcing the sad and tragic news of Jack's untimely death at the age of fifty-three. Gone were our future plans and dreams, cancelled by the Grim Reaper.

AFTER Jack Kelly's death I continued to write for the Fiction House chain of magazines, with Jack Byrne and Malcolm Reiss as editors. Both had been with Fiction House for many years and they stayed on until the death of J. W. Glenister, co-partner with Jack Kelly in the publishing end, and the magazines were no more. Both Jack Byrne and Malcolm Reiss were great editors in their own right and I classed them as real friends.

From 1922 to 1949 I, of course, continued writing for *Western Story Magazine*, with F. E. Blackwell as editor and later on, Jack Burr. I had only met Blackwell once and that was on my one and only visit to New York in 1931 when he took me for my one and only ride on the subway.

Jack Burr visited me in Tucson where I had built a home in 1937. Jack Burr was a good friend of mine and still is, and like Jack Kelly, he gave me the feature story and the cover on almost every issue of *Western Story*. Often he ran little human interest articles about me and my horse, my cat and typewriter. I wrote steadily, a 12,000-word story every month, until the September, 1949 issue when *Western Story* folded without advance warning.

In 1933 I started writing for the Popular Publications chain. These included *Argosy, Adventure, Dime Western, Star Western, Big Book, New Western, Ace High*, and a special issue of a *Walt Coburn's Western Magazine* during 1949 and 1950.

I rated the feature story and top cover billing in *Dime Western* and *Star Western* each and every month for a period of almost twenty years, together with stories in Popular's other pulps. The editor for Popular was Rogers Terrill,

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who came out nearly every year to visit me and talk shop. Rogers Terrill was a great little guy and a fine editor, as every writer who ever worked for him well knew. After Terrill moved over to *Argosy*, Mike Tilden became editor of *Dime* and *Star Western*, with Harry Widmer as editor of *Ten Story Magazine*. I am sorry to say I never met Mike Tilden or Harry Widmer, except through correspondence.

I have often regretted I didn't keep all the letters that passed between me and these great editors, Jack Kelly, Jack Byrne, Malcolm Reiss of Fiction House, Arthur Sullivan Hoffman of *Adventure*, F. E. Blackwell and Jack Burr of *Western Story*, and a few others. Some of those letters were masterpieces.

Writing for the Popular Publications group of pulp magazines, together with Street & Smith's *Western Story Magazine* and other pulps such as *Short Stories*, with Dorothy McIllwraith as editor; and *Giant* and *Popular Western* with Leo Marguilies as editor, I had the feature story and top billing on the covers of as many as four and five magazines on the newstands every month over a period of many years.

During the 1930s and 1940s I mailed and sold a yearly turnout to publishers estimated at 600,000 words—a tremendous stint when you consider I did this without cessation for twenty-odd years. I am sure other writers have equaled this mark and may have passed it, but few, if any, kept it up for two decades.

DURING the years, my word rate increased so that during the last few years of the pulps I was getting four and five cents a word, and a few times the rate even reached seven cents. Perhaps that is why Author Fred Gipson once referred to Walt Coburn as "King of the Pulps."

In my files are over 800 published stories, mostly novelettes, and about forty books in hard cover and paperback to show for my years of writing.

I've worked with a bottle of hooch alongside my typewriter, but cold sober I got the job done quicker, easier, and invariably, more lucidly. The editors were mighty tolerant about riding me with a hackamore instead of a spade bit, and it worked out better all-around.

There was not much room for description in the pulps. The keynote was action. Some yarns needed romance. Others were better off without a romantic angle that might have a tendency to take the strength out of it. Unless the woman was a strong character, I kept her out of a western. They'd look silly around a cow outfit. When I punched cows the only time the average cowpuncher ever saw a woman was when he got to town and blew his wages around the saloons and honkeytonks. That didn't count squaws.

My plots came out of the stars. I might wake up in the middle of the night with some kind of an idea that would keep me awake. It might be nothing more than a single character, or a catch phrase I'd heard. Or a horse that reminded me of a horse I once knew and the man that rode that forgotten horse. Things like that. Dreams that took shape. The plots just came from nowhere.

I'll always like "The Ringtailed Rannyhans" better than anything I ever did. Like Topsy, it just grew, and it was written for Jack Kelly. I have since written far better yarns, but that rambling, get-nowhere story will never lose its particular place in my memories.

I sort of went at the job of pulp writing like it was a game I got a big kick out of. No set plan of work. Nary an idea in my skull. Kind of a cockeyed, haphazard way of putting down words on paper. I liked to have a strong dramatic situation sort of pictured in my mind. Like a stage set. The characters on it. The characters might be based on some cowpuncher or outlaw, gambler or bartender or lawman that I knew on the range or around some cowtown. I turned them loose. Let them act out their parts, speak their own dialogue. I made no notes. I had no plot to start with. I let the characters do the work, act out the whole yarn. The plot developed as the yarn unfolded.

I mixed reality in with imaginary characterization. With few exceptions no real character I ever knew stayed wholly real to the end of the yarn. Real characters or real incidents were apt to be too wooden. They had to be pliable in fiction. I used to get comical letters from old cowpunchers I used in yarns. One of them said he had taken to packing a six-shooter again so he could live up to the tough rep I'd given him in the story.

I went to work right after breakfast, four or five hours a day. I worked in a cabin away from the main house. Nobody came near my workshop unless they horned in uninvited. No interruptions like telephones, vacuum cleaners or visitors. I'd quit around noon. My day's work would be over. I wouldn't think about it or even discuss it. I took my siesta hour, then saddled my horse and rode back into the hills. Or if I was living near the ocean, I'd go swimming. No night life. Saturday night was my one night to howl. I never worked on Sunday. Monday my work week began, with a day or two off between each story. Seldom more vacation than that.

I COULD WRITE a book about reactions from readers. Old-time cowpunchers who worked for our Circle C outfit in Montana when I was a kid wrangling horses. Men doing time in the pen. A few priests. Old-time outlaws writing me under assumed names. A young lad over in County Donegal, Ireland, who made a play out of one of my yarns. I sent him a ten-gallon hat and a pair of Mexican spurs. The only such hat and spurs in that part of Ireland in those days. A Britisher who was planning on coming out West some day and was, in the course of preparation, milking cows at a dairy near London. A small boy who had the same name as mine. A tough Irish cop in New York who "said a bit of a prayer" for me because he liked a story I wrote. A down-and-out prizefighter who once ranked among the old-time champs. Jack Dempsey who read all my yarns and in whose training camp at Soper's Ranch in the Ojai Valley in California I once spent three months

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back in 1927. Senators. Bankers. Judges. Rodeo contestants. Bums. Cowhands who could spot a flaw in a story (and I have yet to pick so much as a nit out of my blankets). A lunger living on borrowed time. Those were the folks I heard from and their letters were more gratifying than the fat checks. One letter from a man "who knew me when" said he'd like to put me and some of my pardners in the pen where we belonged for cattle rustling!

I have had a few writer friends over the years, mostly among the old pros such as Eugene Manlove Rhodes, polished writers who left their mark and are long gone. But for the most part since I started writing for a living I've played a lone hand. I have always been a loner —never a joiner.

In all my years of fiction writing I never rewrote a story—never missed a deadline, drunk or sober—never used an agent, dealing direct with the editors.

The folding of the pulp magazines wrecked the gravy train for the pulp writers. Why they folded has never been satisfactorily explained, but I doubt, as some have said, that it was the advent of television. Rather I would say that the rising cost of production and the limit reached on the price the publishers could get for the magazines, plus an over-production of magazines on the newsstand, had a lot to do with it.

The so-called "Adult" Westerns in paperback form have replaced the pulp magazines, but time alone will tell whether they will endure over three decades as did the pulps, and give as much low-priced reading entertainment to so many.

I know that somewhere along the trail the Señor Dios laid a hand on my shoulder and shaped my destiny. Such is my belief and will continue to be until I follow the ghost rider on the pale horse on my last circle into the Shadow Hills.

Johnnie Matheson's Mysterious Friend

(Continued from page 19)

Several ranchers told of the Englishman arriving at their places, often after nightfall, and how he would just stay the night, have his saddle horse fed, watered and rested, and then he'd be up with the rest of the hands for an early breakfast and off he'd ride, pleasant and mannerly to all.

Close behind him usually drove this Indian girl who folks said spoke very little English but could make it clear she was looking for this Englishman whose name was Edward. When she did not find him, she would drive on, but it wasn't unusual to see her lurking around the place Indian-fashion, doing a scouting job, trailing him from his one-night stands.

THIS NIGHT at Geyser we could see that Johnnie was there. We joined the travelers at the supper table and soon were having a grand time renewing old times with folks we'd not met for a while. Johnnie and the Britisher made room for us with them, and I tell you this fellow was a handsome one, with dark auburn curly hair and blue eyes.

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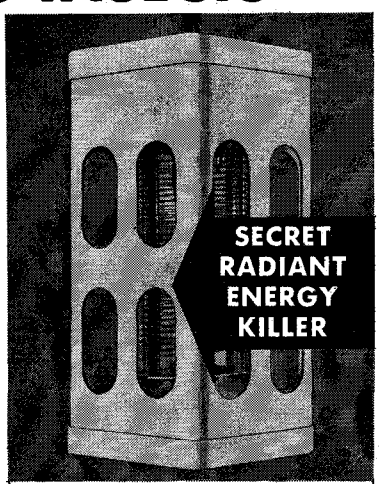

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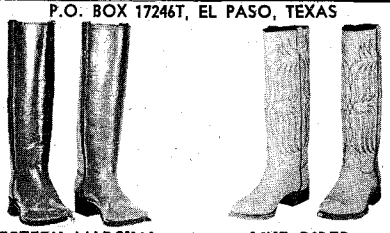

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He was big, too, with a powerful build.

Johnnie said he was taking this Englishman with him to Lewistown and Utica next day, and he hoped to sober him up and rest him for the long hard trip it would be.

The man's ruddy complexion was made even ruddier by all the booze he'd drunk. He claimed to be hunting in this part of the country and said his home was in Ottawa, Canada. He seemed very interested in gold mining; possibly the gold camps were good gambling spots, I thought to myself.

Afterwards we talked him over and most of the fellows were of the opinion that he was a great liar and a "no good, two-bit sport." In those times people went their different ways and little attention was paid to them, for every man's business was his own and no one ever asked personal questions. In the first place it was dangerous, and the second it was not the custom among Westerners to pry into any man's past. Once at old Bill Cresap's place some people had claimed to know about this "squaw man," but afterwards we forgot all about him until we met Johnnie at Pat O'Hara's place in old Geyser quite a few months later. We were in for an interesting evening, as he told everything.

But to go back to the freighting business of Johnnie's and what a trip to Lewistown and Utica was like on these rough hauls—Johnnie would haul most anything, from silks and fancies for ladies to big stuff like stoves, wagon wheels, and mine machinery. Johnnie would sure try like hell to get it up to the folks that needed it so bad. Of course, this was all before the railroads came in. He was brutal to horses, though, and once I saw him beat a team with a hammer and an axe handle. I've made him stop more than once and called him "Hammer and Axe John"; he'd cuss me blue then, buy me a drink, and go on with his loading without the beatings.

His outfit generally consisted of fourteen horses and three wagons—the lead wagon, middle, and a tail wagon—maybe he'd add a cart if needed. In bad weather a trip to Lewistown from Great Falls could take as long as ten to fifteen days, and in real good weather about five days.

Johnnie had what is known as a jerk-line outfit. The freighter could ride the saddled wheel horse on the left hand side nearest the wagon, or have an extra rider urge the teams uphill by riding alongside with a big blacksnake whip, or ride on the lazy board.

Charlie Russell was a life-long friend of Johnnie Matheson and he used Johnnie and his outfit for a model when he painted his famous oil called "The Jerk Line." In 1912, I believe, Russell was riding with Johnnie on that last famous haul from Great Falls to Utica. The railroads had come.

JOHNNIE MATHESON was a Scotchman, and was born in a place in Ontario, Canada, called Wallacetown, though he always said just "Wallace." He claimed to have been the best singer in the church choir back home. He did like to sing and had a good voice. Johnnie said he liked the Britisher, who knew all the same old places he did in Ontario, and gladly consented to take him along on his long trip, for the fellow was good company.

While the freighter was stopped to water and grain up the teams at a place along the road, he noticed that the Englishman sure looked all in. Johnnie told him to go back in one of the wagons where he had a lot of buffalo coats and robes and some blankets. As these wagons were all covered, they were comfortable enough and out of the wind, so the Englishman went back to sleep in one of them.

Johnnie pulled out thinking to himself, "Let him sleep it off. I'll not disturb him for a long time, and it will do him a lot of good." Booze had about got him.

Much later they reached one of their stopping places. Looking in the wagon to see how his passenger was faring, Johnnie got a shock for the man was stone dead.

It was some distance to a doctor and an undertaker. Lewistown was the nearest help they could get.

When the doctor arrived, he said that the fellow had died of a heart attack probably brought on by his heavy drinking. The undertaker and the sheriff examined every inch of his clothing and do you know that in one of his pockets, tightly pressed into a very little square was a paper, and it proved to be a marriage certificate. It stated that this man and an Indian woman of a certain tribe and territory were legally married by a Catholic priest. The two had signed it at a mission. The print and signatures were badly damaged but the name "Edward" was fairly readable.

He had also a heavy gold watch and chain, and on the inside cover were photos of his parents who had given him the watch in London. The engraving established his identity, but not until these items had been sent to Ottawa and then forwarded to England.

As Johnnie had figured in their boy's last hours, he was given a full report by the parents. They wanted to thank him for his kindness to their wayward son who had left England and had not written home for so long a time. This British subject came of a very wealthy and well-born family, although he was not of noble birth as so many had said. Nothing was known of the Indian wife.

Johnnie was a great reader in the winter months when he had lots of time. He knew the history of England and most of Europe. To him this incident was ever so interesting and he related it to me many times over the years. In the early days it was not too uncommon to come across some ne'er-do-well of a prominent family from England, France and Switzerland, for they were tired of their monotonous life at home and sought excitement and adventure. They had plenty of money to spend.

Johnnie died at Chico Hot Springs, Montana, after freighting for twenty-five years, but through Russell's great painting, "The Jerk Line," Johnnie Matheson will live forever in the memory of the West.

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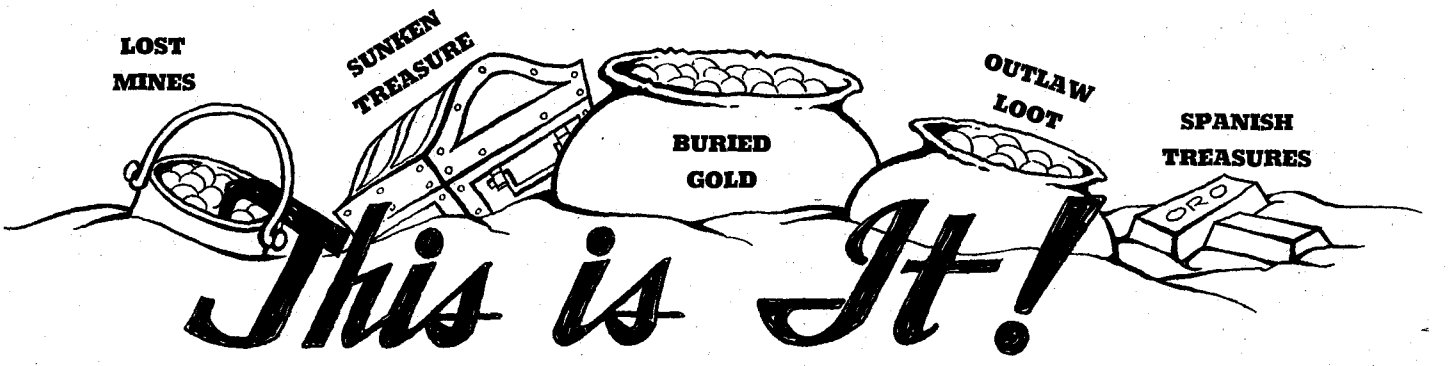

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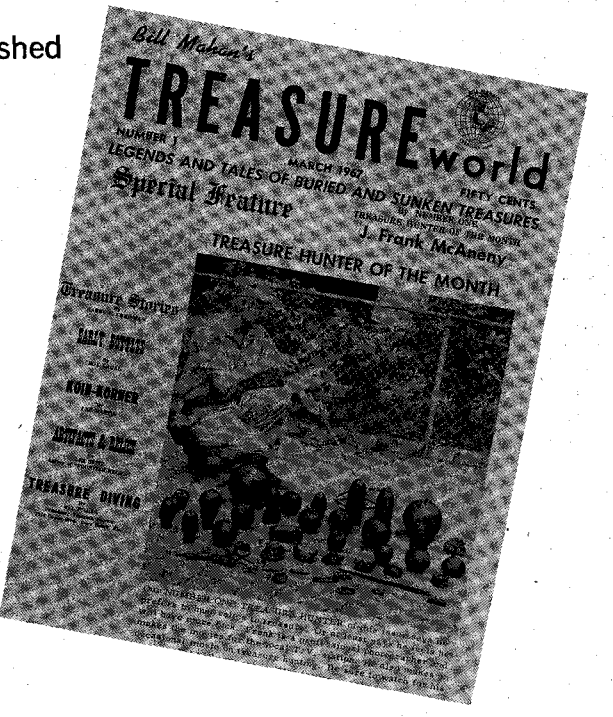

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Fabulous Montezuma

(Continued from page 31)

meats. There were also fresh vegetables shipped from California.

During the early part of 1920 when I worked in a photography shop in Las Vegas, one of these old menus was brought in for us to copy. It was a four-page affair listing not only the foods served but also the wines and liqueurs.

The dream of the early builders was to make Montezuma the watering place and social center of North America. The hotel published its own newspaper, and many notable events were recorded in it. One was the birth of a daughter, born to Duke of Rutland (England) and his wife while they were guests there. This child was the sister of the beautiful and famous actress, Lady Diana Manners.

Among the many noted people who visited Montezuma were General Grant, President Hayes, General Sherman, Princess Louise (daughter of Queen Victoria), a Japanese Emperor, Kaiser Wilhelm III, and several state governors.

On June 2, 1897, President McKinley appointed Miguel A. Otero of Las Vegas, governor of the Territory of New Mexico. The town's citizens gave Governor and Mrs. Otero a farewell reception at the Montezuma. A special train of four coaches took them to the hotel, arriving at 9 p.m. Dancing continued until midnight when the doors to the dining room were opened for a banquet.

NOT ONE particular incident, but rather a succession of events, brought an end to the era of Montezuma as a resort hotel. In 1893 a railroad strike caused the loss of tourist trade. Perhaps the lawlessness which was sweeping the county, town, and surrounding country contributed its share to the decline. Also, the Santa Fe Railroad had built El Tovar, another luxury hotel, at Grand Canyon. In October, 1903 the famous Montezuma was closed.

For two years the building stood empty, a great stone ghost. The National Fraternal Association was then given the use of the property with an option to buy but the hotel was finally turned back to the railroad. Many attempts were made by Las Vegas citizens to reopen the facilities, but all failed.

In 1913 the railroad deeded the property to the YMCA. Later the Bible Film Company took an option from the YMCA. Some pilot film was shot, but the cost of maintaining the huge establishment was prohibitive and it was returned to the YMCA. In 1920 the City of Las Vegas became the legal owner and transferred the property to the New Mexico Baptist Church. Although given the name, New Mexico Baptist College, it almost at once was being called Montezuma Baptist College. The school offered four years of high school and two years of college.

Within a few years the college was in financial trouble. There was no endowment from the central church and, though applied for, government funds were not forthcoming. When the heating system broke down, the church was glad to accept an offer from the Committee of Bishops of the Catholic Hierarchy of the United States and the Mexican Catholic Bishops to purchase the property. In 1937 the purchase was completed at a cost of $19,000 and thus the Montezuma Seminary of Las Vegas was founded.

Attainment of priesthood requires eight years of training, three years academic and five years theological. Today the cross atop the main cupola has replaced the name flag. What was once the annex, Mountain House, is a dormitory. A shrine is located in what was once the park. The old power plant, with its massive brick smokestack, has been abandoned. Modern methods of heating and lighting are in use. The garden blooms again.

Black-robed priests roam the grounds, busy at the work of continuous improvement, engaged in outdoor sports, or just strolling in the gardens in meditation. Artists come to paint the buildings and the surrounding hills. The buildng remains aloof, shrouded in majestic splendor, so very old in many ways yet as new as each morning sunrise.

Could it be that Chief Montezuma, god of the ancient Pecos Indians, has indeed fulfilled his promise and returned to the land of his people?

Coe's Castle on the Carrizo—1867

(Continued from page 16)

pistol on the table right by his hand. He intended to win and there would be no argument about it. He did. Others sat in from time to time and lost to the Captain who knew his poker as well as he did women.

One of Coe's most trusted men took no part in the festivities, but sat on a chair in the corner with two pistols and his rifle ready in case anybody tried to quell his rowdy companions. When an outlaw passed out he was laid on the floor near this guard.

After awhile the poker game ended. The Captain had all the money so he sacked it up and deposited it under the chair occupied by his vigilant guard.

There wasn't a girl in the place whose heart didn't skip a couple of beats when Coe glanced her way. And realizing he was expected to brighten up the day for these ladies, he walked over and spoke to the head musician. The rowdy dancing to folk music like *Oh Susanna* and *Buffalo Gals* gave way to polkas such as *Excelsior*.

The crowd made way for the Captain to demonstrate his dancing skill with each of the girls in turn. As the exhibition ended, the Captain acknowledged the hearty applause of the crowd with a gracious bow.

Coe was not one to be caught napping. Early in the afternoon he had sent a rider to a high point north of town to watch for the Apishapa boys. About five o'clock the rider raced into town.

Coe and his gang, with ten of the dance hall girls, hurried to the horses. As the Goodnight waddies thundered into Trinidad from the north the Coe gang galloped out at the south side of town, and each spare horse was carrying a dance hall queen to the Roost on the Carrizo. Coe did not have to urge the girls to go, for it was common knowledge that he

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never allowed any brutality with the women at the Roost, and the visit would be quite different from the maulings they sometimes were subjected to in the saloons.

The Apishapa cowhands made no attempt to follow the gang. Some of them were friendly with the Captain and the others had not relished the idea of tangling with the outlaws. Since the gang had cleared out, this gave the Goodnight boys an excuse to return to the ranch.

THE renegades from Robbers' Roost grew more greedy with every raid. Their escapades in Trinidad were added to the growing list of complaints to Colonel Penrose. Pouncing on straggling or crippled wagons and making off with loot was much safer than tackling a whole wagontrain; and it was easier to steal a lone settler's livestock than to deal with a score of determined men in a settlement. Many of Coe's men preferred these tamer tactics, although this sort of thing may have palled on the more adventuresome—particularly the Boss.

In any event, Coe took thirty picked men and rode west to Fort Union in New Mexico. There they rounded up a bunch of government horses. While doing this they noticed what seemed to be a surplus of army mules, so some of these were run in with the stolen horses and the combined herd soon found a new home along the Cimarron in Coe's corrals. Then the Captain led his men on a duplicate raid at Fort Lyon.

This was much too much—the last straw! Smarting from the castigation they received because of the stolen livestock, the soldier scapegoats now really got high behind. A company of troops from Fort Lyon headed down Carrizo way where they surprised eleven of the gang sleeping in a deserted shack. These men were captured and hanged without ceremony.

The outlaw leader was not with the Unlucky Eleven when they met their fate but the soldiers dogged his trail until they captured him. Coe was put in prison, but somehow managed to escape. Now the Fort Lyon garrison *was* in a dither.

Whether the routing of the gang from Robbers' Roost was before or after the hanging of the eleven outlaws is not clear. In the little town of Kenton at the tip of the Oklahoma Panhandle, you can hear the following account.

Riled by the ignominy of Coe's jail break, the soldiers again left Fort Lyon and took the trail for the Carrizo, but this time with a six-inch cannon. On reaching Black Mesa there was much sweating and cussing as they dragged the cannon up the almost perpendicular 600-foot wall of the mesa, mounted it on a point overlooking Carrizo Creek, aimed it at the stronghold a mile distant, and cut loose. The aim was perfect. A large hole was smashed into the thick wall, scattering rocks, bandits and girls in all directions. Men who were able fled into the river breaks. The frightened girls huddled in a group near the battered Roost.

The troopers took to the chase with trailhound persistence. Several of the

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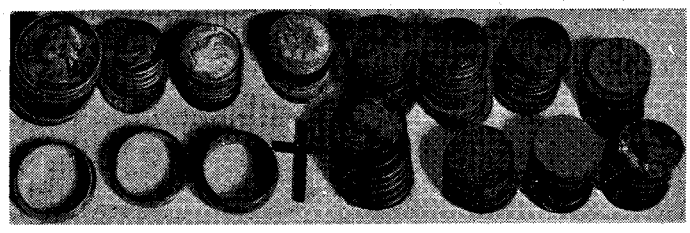

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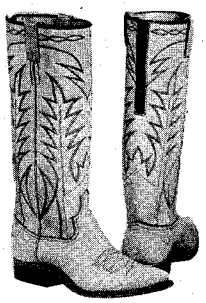

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outlaws were captured and given necktie parties—but Will-O'-the-Wisp William Coe had vanished into thin air.

Some of the old-timers swear he was again captured and that the mannerly marauder made monkeys of the guards by escaping a second time from Fort Lyon. The soldiers scoured the canyons and mesas—but no Bill. For weeks he laid low.

A SMALL GROUP of soldiers had been stationed for some time on the Emery Ranch in New Mexico, fifty miles west of Robbers' Roost. Their camp along a creek bank was well hidden by brush as it was surmised Coe would eventually come that way in trying to join the remnants of his scattered band at the damaged Roost.

At last the disgruntled troopers folded their tents and took off toward the fort, thinking the outlaw leader must have left the country for good. Rancher Emery accompanied them for a few miles.

Soon after their departure, Mrs. Emery noticed a horseman coming cautiously toward the house. As he drew near she realized the bedraggled and worn looking fellow was Coe. His long hair was matted, and tired eyes stared from a brushy face. Bill was acquainted with the lady who was now waiting outside to greet him. She had been a widow with a young son when she married the rancher a few years before. On several occasions Coe had visited the Emerys and was treated kindly, which was why he had decided to stop here in his hour of need.

"Why Captain Coe, you look all fagged out! Get right down and I'll get you something to eat." Then the lady called her son, "Bud, take Mr. Coe's horse and give him some feed and water!"

Although dead tired from lack of sleep, Coe retained the wary instinct of the hunted. He held his rifle in readiness as he watched the boy go toward the horse. "Anyone else around?" he asked. Mrs. Emery assured him there was not, but still the bandit was uneasy.

"Why don't you rest a bit in the bunkhouse while I cook something? It won't take long, and then you'll be rested up before going on. But you know you're welcome to stay as long as you care to, Captain."

"No, thank you. I'll just stay long enough to eat a bite. But I *will* rest a little while you fix it." With that the outlaw walked toward the bunkhouse, took a good look around before entering, then lay down on a bunk with his rifle at his side.

Mrs. Emery waited for a few minutes then motioned to her son. "Now Bud," she whispered, "you be very quiet. Get your pony and lead him out of sight of the bunkhouse then get on and ride slow and careful. When you're sure you're out of earshot, don't spare the whip. You've got to get those soldiers back here quick."

When Bud had gone, his mother got to thinking of what might happen to her should the outlaw awaken and discover the boy's absence. She thought of many things she might say, but all of them seemed to be flimsy explanations to direct to a man of Coe's intelligence.

For over two nerve-racking hours Mrs. Emery waited—any moment expecting to hear Bill approaching. However, he was dead to the world—exhaustion having overcome him.

At long, long last the woman's straining eyes saw a dust cloud in the distance. As the hard-riding troopers drew nearer, she frantically waved for them to slow down to a walk so as not to awaken Bill. They got the message and came quietly into the yard as Mrs. Emery pointed toward the bunkhouse.

Dismounting, the troopers silently circled it. Twenty rifles were aimed—some at the door, others toward the one window. Then the corporal barked a sharp command, "Come out, Coe—hands up—quick!"

A few seconds passed during which Bill instinctively grabbed rifle and pistol while forcing his sleep-fogged eyes to take stock of his chances for escape. A glance out the window foretold doom. A peek through the door crack revealed the same end.

There seemed to remain only one chance in a million for the bandit chief—a next to impossible third-time jail break. Bill had no other choice. He uncocked his pistol, laid it and the rifle on the bunk that had given him the only comfort he had known in weeks, then pushing the door open with one foot he walked slowly out into the glare of day, his hands overhead.

Coe was not one to panic when the chips were down. Showing no fear as his gaze swept the line of rifles, all aimed at one common target, he moved directly toward the young corporal who yelled "Halt!" when about ten paces separated them, then warned, "Keep 'em up and don't move!" As handcuffs were snapped on the outlaw, Mrs. Emery breathed a deep sigh of relief.

Bill was searched. Then as he was marched past the house, he glanced knowingly at the boy's sweating horse and smiled faintly at the lady.

Early the next morning the troopers left for Pueblo with their captive. While imprisoned there and awaiting trial he was taken from jail one night, hanged to a cottonwood tree on the bank of Fountain Creek, and buried there July 21, 1868.

Many years later a handcuffed skeleton with leg irons was accidentally disinterred by some workmen. It was uncovered near the tree where the King of Robbers' Roost was hanged.

Author's note: Information for this article came from many sources.

For three weeks my wife and I camped on the Brookhart Ranch in the Black Mesa country east of Kenton, Oklahoma, where we absorbed the feel of this big land, from many very friendly ranchers, heard numerous tales of the Robbers' Roost Gang. Sketches, paintings and photos were made while there.

Of special interest were accounts in the Boise City (Oklahoma) *News*, which Publisher Roy Butterbaugh and one of his employees, Bob Riddle, so generously gave to me. Material from the Museum of New Mexico, Santa Fe, and from the Oklahoma Historical Society has also been of much help. J. Evetts Haley's very fine book, *Charles Goodnight, Cowman and Plainsman*, was another source of reference.

Especially valuable were letters written to me by Alice Emery. (Matt Emery, her father-in-law, was "Bud" Emery's half-brother, and was about a year old when Bud made his daring ride to bring back the troopers who captured Coe.)

Helen Rushmore, Tulsa, Oklahoma, author of several books, has been of much help, as has Ike Osteen, Springfield, Colorado.

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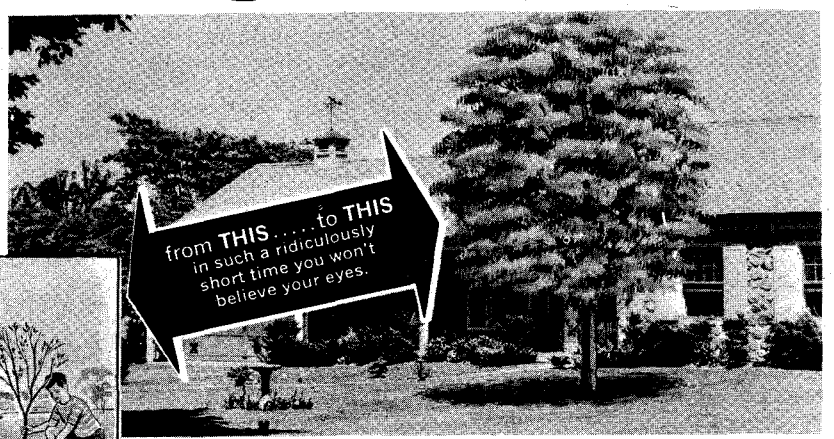

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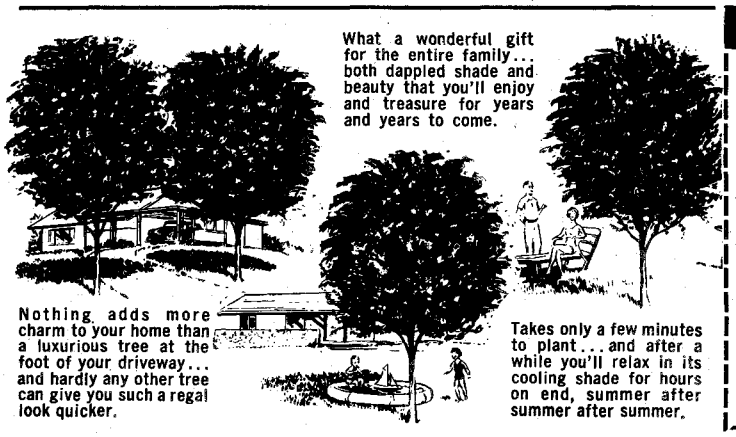

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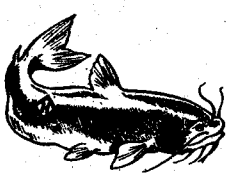

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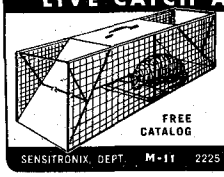

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Trails Grown Dim

(Continued from page 41)

Nat T. Guest.

I would like to hear from folks who have loved ones buried there. They're all quiet and don't talk, but you who are living can bring to light and help establish the plot of the cemetery and the history of both communities.—Inez Ward, Rt. 1, Box 40, San Angelo, Texas 76901.

Slim Evans

In 1927 I went to work for the Steeple H. Ranch at Gila Bend, Arizona, eighty-five miles southwest of Phoenix. The foreman there was Slim Evans, the only surviving member of Billy the Kid's gang. He told me that when the Lincoln County War was over, he personally was charged with four murders, so he headed for old Mexico, expecting to stay there the rest of his life. He went deep into the interior and after fourteen years a cattle buyer from Lincoln appeared. When he saw Slim he said, "What are you doing buried in a place like this?"

Slim said, "I am charged with murder back home."

The buyer said, "Forget it, the war is over. Pat Garrett is dead, the district attorney is dead, the whole crowd is gone, there is nobody left who would press charges against you." So he came back to the U. S., and wound up at the Steeple H. Due to being stood up against a wall and shot by Pancho Villa in Mexico., he was crippled in the hips, and had a rolling, leg-throwing walk.

The ranch had a riding boss named Tom Crow who was another Lincoln County man of the same times. Tom was not in the war on either side, but knew everyone who was.

I was the corral boss and part of my job was to haul drinking water from Gila Bend. For three months I bought a quart of whiskey every day, and each evening I would get the two of them in Tom's private quarters and start them talking about the old days. Then I would just sit back and listen.

Since both of them were in their sixties, they would be well over 100 now and must be dead. Slim owned a number of houses in Phoenix and probably died there. I am writing you in hopes someone can tell me something of his passing. —Bob Monroe, Box 335B, Star Rt., Rio Vista, California 94571.

John Marshall

I am attempting to assemble for publication the papers of Chief Justice John Marshall. You would help me greatly by drawing the project to the attention of your readers.—Stephen G. Kurtz, Editor, The Papers of John Marshall, Box 220, Williamsburg, Virginia 23185.

Susie E. Fugett

In 1880 my stepfather, G. W. Savage, my mother Ellen Savage, my brother, Walker Miller, my half-sister Susie Evelyn Fugett, another half-sister Henry Myrtle Savage, and I lived near Hempstead, Texas. My mother died that year at the age of twenty-eight. The day she died, she asked a neighbor if she would take Susie and raise her, for Susie had been sick most of her life, and Mother wanted to know that she would be cared for.

The family with whom she left Susie was the Jim Taylor family (I do not remember Mrs. Taylor's first name) for at the time I was only seven years old and Susie was five years old.

I would like very much to hear something about her whereabouts.—Ester Lee Miller Knapp, Box 303, Davis, Oklahoma 73030.

R. R. Doubleday

Will anyone having any information about the late Mr. Ralph Russell Doubleday please write me. Mr. Doubleday was the greatest rodeo photographer past or present. He was active from 1910s to 1950s.—Robert R. Prester, 919 Richardson Court, Cheyenne, Wyoming 82001.

Jacob Yokum

I am trying to trace the family of Jacob Yokum, born 1802, Tennessee, and married to Eveline Mooney. They were the parents of fourteen children born in Dade County, Missouri, 1824 to 1854.

I know one member of the family left Chico, California, about 1870 and I think moved to Amarillo, Texas, but I can't seem to make contact.—Mrs Ed Barton, Route #3, Box 194, Chico, California 95926.

Craig—Taw

John Doyle Lee (Mormon of Mountain Meadows Massacre) was my great-great-grandfather. What I need to know is the name of one of his wives who was my great-great-grandmother. Their daughter (name also unknown) married Alfred Craig, who was an early settler of Fredonia, Kansas. My grandmother, Flora Elizabeth Craig, was born in Fredonia on August 27, 1869 and married my grandfather, Frank Taw, there on August 9, 1889. I would also appreciate hearing from anyone who might have known any relatives of his. He had a brother named John and four sisters Nettie, Bettie, Honor and Mary. They were from Kentucky.

Grandmother had two sisters, Vice and Lily (she married a banker named Short; I believe they lived in San Diego, California) and a brother named Emment. There is some uncertainty as to whether she was a full sister to these three as Alfred Craig may have been married twice. It's easy to trace J. D. L.'s ancestry, as he was well known, but he sure made things difficult with his nineteen wives and sixty-four children!—Mrs. Robert (Georgia) White, 35 Quartz Lane, Sparks, Nevada 89431.

James Whitecotton

I wonder if any of your readers can help me locate any members of the James Whitecotton family of Uvalde County, Texas. Jim Whitecotton had a ranch on the Nueces River, and one son, Jay, had a ranch at Loma Vista, and another at Carrizo Springs. The father, Jim Whitecotton, went to Texas when he was twenty-one years old. At his death he lived at a ranch just off the Rocksprings highway between Laguna and Montell. He was a beekeeper and ex-

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ported thousands of pounds of honey. He rode as a trail hand from Brownwood, Texas, to Abilene, Kansas. He rode for a man named Purrier, and the third trip he rode was for Shanghai Pierce. The next trip was for J. B. Johnson. He kept open house at his ranch for lawmen and outlaws alike, and was instrumental in the capture of several outlaws, having caught some singlehanded. One he apprehended was for Captain Pat Dolan of the Rangers. He died in 1937, and we have no record of the whereabouts of his descendents. They are my great-grandmother's people. I certainly would appreciate any information I can get.—Richard Garrison, Rt. #1, Box 260A, Sullivan, Missouri 63080.

Robert W. George

I want to hear from anyone who used to know Robert William George. He was a full-blooded Cherokee and lived in a small town in Iowa. He was married to Amelia Ann Timander and they had three girls and five boys. I would like to know more about this man.—Mrs. Harry Richard, P. O. Box 107, Bigfork, Montana 59911.

James Singleton

In the articles my husband got when his parents died was an old magazine picture in a frame. I took the magazine picture out and underneath was a photo of about 150 men on the lawn of a large two-story house. On the front at the bottom is written "Confederate Veterans photo by Williams. April 5th 1892." On back is Robert Wymer (or Robert Wyime) Mt. Juiliant, Tenn.

My husband says his grandfather is in this picture. His name was James Singleton. I hope someone can help with this picture, as we know nothing of my husband's people.—Mrs. Jack Singleton, 7501 Pace, Amarillo, Texas 79105.

The Day All Hell Broke Loose!

(Continued from page 25)

outstanding historians and head of the Historical Library at the Freeman School in Klamath Falls (1955), came forth with the truth about this puzzling earthquake.

Her substantiating documents were the letters of Orson A. Stearns, who was a sergeant at Fort Klamath that fateful day in January, 1867.

Mr. Stearns was a fluent writer who put down on paper many of his experiences. His daughter, Blanche Stearns Ager, preserved his letters and was kind enough to share them with those interested in historical documents.

Here is the story of the earthquake from Mr. Stearns himself:

"The winter of 1866-67 found Company I, First Oregon Volunteer Infantry, still in service, though the war was over and the others mustered out.

"The time of the garrison was divided that long winter with the customary guard and police duties which, under the mild reign of Captain F. B. Sprague, then commander of the post, was not rigid or onerous.

"We were fairly well supplied with food. Of books and periodicals we had none except copies of the Jacksonville

(Continued on page 58)

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WESTERN BOOK ROUNDUP

By The Old Bookaroos

RANGE LIFE

Harley True Burton's *A History of the JA Ranch* (Argonaut Press, Ltd., University Microfilms, $8.50) is a facsimile reprint of the very scarce and quite expensive 1928 edition. A long time ago J. Frank Dobie described the book this way —"Facts about one of the greatest ranches of Texas and its founder, Charles Goodnight." That it was factual is not particularly surprising since it was the author's masters thesis at The University of Texas. That it is factual emphasizes its value as a permanent record of a ranching era that is past—with due credit to owners, managers and the working cowhands. Burton did his research when many of the first JA men were still around to contribute their bit. Now, nearly forty years later, those old boys are all gone and we can be thankful for Burton's facts—worthwhile.

Rugged Life in The Rockies (Big Mountain Press, $4.75) by Don La Font is back in print. This simple but forceful autobiography was first published in 1951 (Casper) when the author was seventy-two years old. La Font traces his life from Missouri to Kansas, then to Denver, Colorado, and finally over the mountains to Yuma, Colorado. He was the ninth of ten children and enjoyed close family ties. His story is the experiences of an average rancher. Haying, hunting, trapping, harvesting potatoes, horse racing, carrying mail, storms, ranch chores, and buying and selling land and cattle are a few of the things which kept him busy. Though his life was arduous, La Font enjoyed himself. His book is good on a passing phase of American country life.

HOSS?

Horses and Horses (The Naylor Co. $2.95) by Norman Rosselot is a small book of eight limericks and verses about various kinds of "horses." Sawhorses, seahorses and Charley horses are included. Cartoon illustrated.

PAIUTE LIFE

Annie Lowry was the half-breed daughter of rancher Jerome Lowry and Sautau-nee, full blooded Paiute. Annie was reared and educated by her father but returned to Indian life when Lowry deserted his wife and moved from Lovelock, Neveda to Oregon. The lives of the ranchers and the Paiutes were interwoven yet separate. Annie learned both ways—white and Indian, and although she left the whites, she was never fully accepted by the Paiutes. Her education and experiences with both groups prepared this half-breed woman to leave a picture of the transition from Indian ways to the white man's world for all her people. *Karnee* (University of Nevada Press, $5.25) is a story of Paiute life, legend, and change as told by Annie Lowry to Lalla Scott. The book has an introduction written by Dr. Robert Heizer, Department of Anthropology, University of California, and is a volume in the Lancehead Series.

TIMELY RECORD!

Pioneers of the Big Horn (Big Mountain Press, $3.50) by Bill Scott is a worthy effort to preserve the stories of early residents of Kane, Wyoming. Kane and the surrounding country are about to be inundated by Yellowtail Dam. In its heyday, Kane boasted a bank, two hotels, two general stores, a poolhall, a dancehall, and post office. Scott's book will serve as a record of this town and area after they are flooded out. He tells about the Mormons, irrigation, family life, personal tragedies, the town "characters," and many other forces in the Big Horn Basin of Wyoming that molded Kane. As the waters of Yellowtail rise, Scott's book will grow in importance.

DOUGLAS OF THE FIR

The Douglas fir tree of the West bears the name of David Douglas, scientist and explorer who braved hostiles and other hardships while following the trail to plant discovery. *Plant Detective, David Douglas,* (Julian Messner, $3.25) by Bob and Jan Young presents in story form this famous botanist's travels and work in Canada, Oregon, Alaska, California, Idaho and the Hawaiian Islands. Douglas was a well-educated man from Scotland. At the age of twenty-four he obtained a post with the Horticultural Society of London. He set out immediately on a trip to America to collect fruit trees to grow on English soil. At the age of thirty-five in 1834, Douglas died on a remote Pacific isle. In ten short years he traversed a large portion of the American West and left a bounty of plant information for following generations. Naming the great tree, the Douglas fir was a fitting tribute. The book is written in story form to appeal to young readers.

THE PLAINS

Love Song to the Plains (Bison Books, $1.85) by Mari Sandoz is truly a work of love if not a song. This issue in the popular paperback series of the University of Nebraska Press was made possible through arrangements with Harper and Row. This is a sweeping chronicle of the Indian, buffalo, fur trapper, explorer, homesteader, and Plains lore, as only Mari Sandoz could write it. The author deftly mixes fact and fiction to portray the true Plains and Plainsmen. For those who did not obtain earlier issues, this Bison Book is a bargain.

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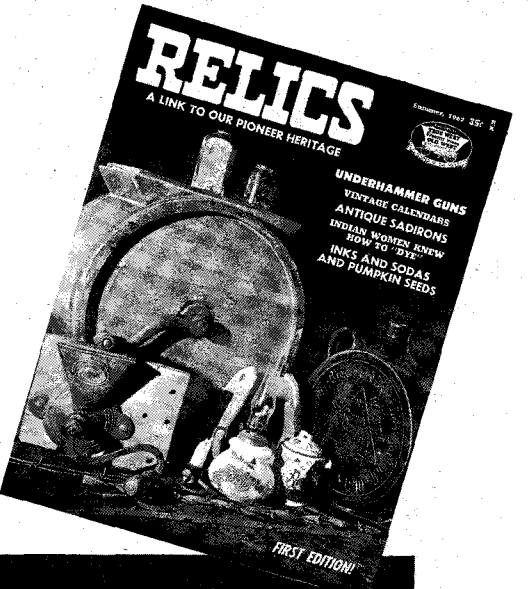

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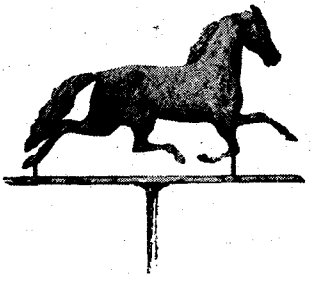

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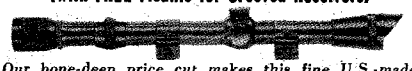

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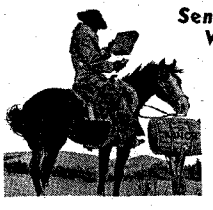

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The Day All Hell Broke Loose!

(Continued from page 55)

papers and a few volumes of fiction owned by some of the boys.

"To relieve the monotony and provide some measure of entertainment, some of us started a weekly paper which we called *The Growler*, as an exponent of our discontent at not being mustered out, and as a disseminator of news, real and imaginary.

"Having no type press, our publication was necessarily limited to one copy, which was read to the assembled company every Saturday night by the editor-in-chief, myself.

"Having a correspondence box outside the Adjutant's office, we were the recipients of all manner and style of correspondence, both prose and poetry. . . .

"Our paper usually consisted of twelve pages of closely written foolscap, and usually embraced all the various departments found in a country newspaper and then some!

"On one or two occasions we printed an extra copy and forwarded it to the Oregon *Sentinel* at Jacksonville on exchange.

"It was during the last weeks of publication, that a communication was brought to me by one of the boys, Thomas S. Warren, and I advised him to send it to the Oregon *Sentinel* by the military express leaving the next morning. The article was quite an exceptionally good plagiarism on the Destruction of Pompeii, localized to fit the environment of Fort Klamath. I thought it would be better appreciated if printed in type, and also at some place other than where it was supposed to have occurred. The results were rather startling!

"The editor of the *Sentinel*, W. G. T'Vault, who was a friend of mine and quite well acquainted with many of the boys, 'smelled a mouse.' So he took the communication over to the rival paper, the *Democratic Times*, I believe. He informed them that he had just received an important communication from Fort Klamath, too late to get into his forms, and told them they might use it if they could do so.

"This they did, and under glaring headlines: 'Tremendous Earthquake at Fort Klamath.' The article was printed in full, with the signature 'By order of Comstock.' But the latter part of the name was strung out and nearly illegible, so that it was accepted to be, 'By order of Commander.'

"The account was copied extensively over the entire United States and cabled to Europe. The War Department took cognizance of the matter and, following an inquiry as to the truth of the matter, sent orders that the perpetrators be sent to Fort Vancouver in irons for punishment, so I was informed by Captain Sprague.

"He came to ask me if I knew the author of the hoax, but advised me to plead ignorance if I did.

"Comrade Warren came to me in great trepidation and begged me not to inform on him, and of course, I so promised. Not until we were mustered out was the matter discussed. I never saw Comrade Warren after that July the 19th day, when we were mustered out in the summer of 1867.

"One very laughable matter in connection with our earthquake was the statement made by two prominent citizens of Rogue Valley that they very distinctively remembered feeling the tremors of the earth at the exact time it was said to have happened. (Showing the power of suggestion possessed by some people.)"

Mr. Stearns went on to say that scientific writers had consulted him about the earthquake and that he had given them the truth.

A sequel to this story was written by Phil F. Brogan in an article printed in the Portland *Oregonian* June 26, 1966.

"One hundred years ago an Oregon earthquake that never occurred made news around the world and is still finding its way into literature dealing with great tremors in North America.

"It was the 'Fort Klamath earthquake,' not only an earth shaker, as reported by a soldier, but one that stirred the War Department. The story of this oft-repeated tremor is told by Buena Cobb Stone in her interesting little book, *Fort Klamath.*"

At the close of Mr. Brogan's account, he added: "Reporter Warren apparently was not aware of the fact, but he wrote his earthquake story in an area that was once shaken by tremors and covered by volcanic dust.

"But that real quake occurred not in Fort Klamath days, but some 6,600 years ago when giant Mazama blew its top to form Crater Lake (just a few miles north in that same county)."

Littleman's Strange Revenge

(Continued from page 29)

No second shot seemed to be necessary. One raider was certainly dead and probably two from the same bullet. The camp erupted suddenly as Paiutes sprinted away in every direction from the danger zone. Most were armed.

Littleman knew they would be coming swiftly to the source of the shot. Withdrawing, he unhobbled and headed toward Navajo Mountain. With another full dawn he rode in at his sister's hogan.

BEFORE the new moon, he learned in angry dismay that his bullet only creased Dobby, although killing the Paiute next to him. He heard this when Hoskinni Begay visited the Navajo mountain country from Monument Valley.

On reaching the Dohi's permanent hogan, the usual tribal courtesies were extended the visitor. That night beside a warming hogan center fire he reported all the news from his district. His mother was a Paiute related to those doing the raiding. Somewhat casually he got around to saying that Chief Dobby, while en route home some days past, had been mysteriously fired on by a sniper.

Littleman was too staggered to offer even a polite comment. Hoskinni Begay dwelled longest on the Paiutes' report of a murderous *chindi* inhabiting the small canyons south of and upstream from the junction of the San Juan and Colorado Rivers. The evil one had caused a number of tragic deaths.

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By the time he got that far in his slow way of talking, Littleman realized that he actually had come among them as a spy. Uncertain about the secret cliff trail, the Paiutes suspected a Navajo Mountain Indian was carrying on a bitter blood vendetta against them.

Hoskinni Begay remarked questioningly that since they lived nearest the terror-filled canyon, perhaps they knew something about the *chindi.* Dohi replied this was their first intimation of evil there. Navajos did not go that close to the river except infrequently while hunting lost horses.

The next day after Hoskinni Begay's departure homeward by Redlake, Littleman returned to the canyon rim. It was then well into October, with a threat of snow in the air. Despite the cold he refrained from kindling a fire, descending at once onto the cliff trail.

The mummified spectre remained seated undisturbed. There existed no evidence that anyone had been around. Before sundown a light snow was falling. It curtained the river and he did not see eight Paiutes when they crossed south. He knew of their nearness only when iron-shod hoofs rang on the stone passage below. Startled, and fearing they would ride by without confronting the spectre of death, he hastened down the crack.

Gaining no more than half way, he came to sudden halt from feeling his way in the murk. A terrible cry, then several, followed by sounds of struggling horses, echoed through the screen of white flakes. All screams of men and stock ended with dull crashes echoing upward from the canyon floor.

Waiting cautiously for nearly an hour, Littleman went on to the trail. The fall had lessened a bit, but six inches of loose snow lay on the trail shelf. He could only determine that three or four managed to retreat safely from death.

Back on the rim he found the snow falling fast and thick. It continued all that night and the next day. All canyon trails were closed, and remained so the harsh winter long.

When spring thaws started, word reached the Navajo Mountain country that Chief Dobby was no more. The Paiutes would not explain how he died, simply saying that the "spirits came and got him."

Of course, Dobby might not have been with the party that stormy night. But Littleman felt sorely put out to believe that his enemy died other than by his contrivance.

Going to the old watching point he climbed down. The spectre grinned fixedly with only his head and shoulders rising out of a melting snow bank.

Following the narrow trail down to the canyon floor, Littleman turned up it to the site where men and horses had crashed to their doom from above.

Wild animals had been at the carcasses, scattering bones and parts over a couple of acres. It was impossible to identify anyone specifically. Littleman feared he would never know what happened to Dobby.

Thinking this, he came in under the stone wall. The remains of a man stuck

(Continued on page 62)

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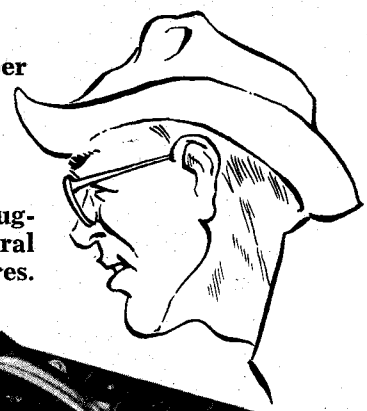

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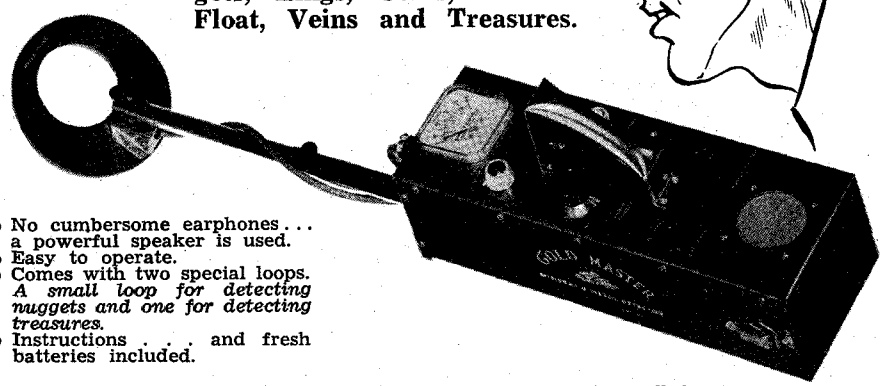

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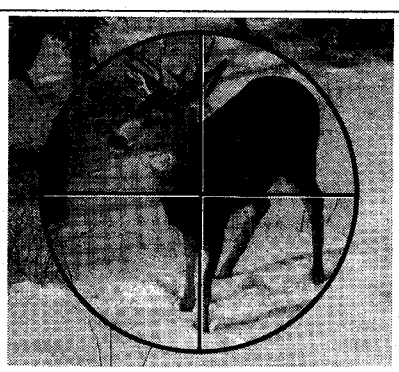

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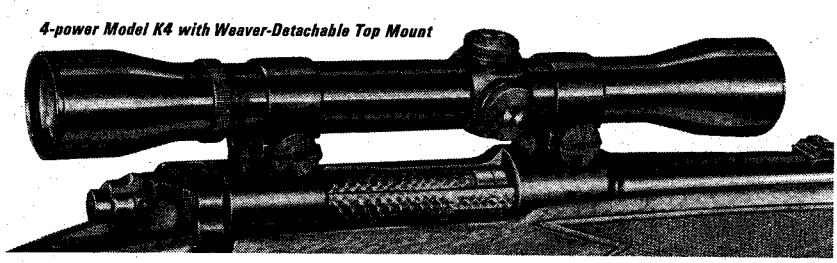

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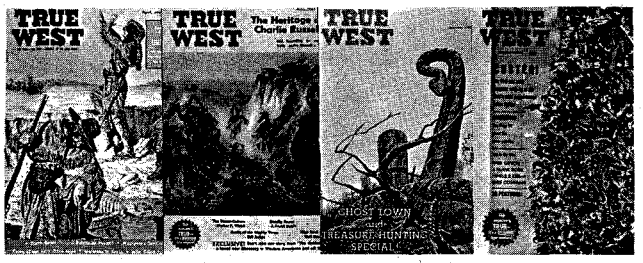

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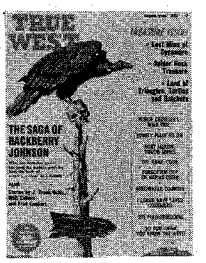

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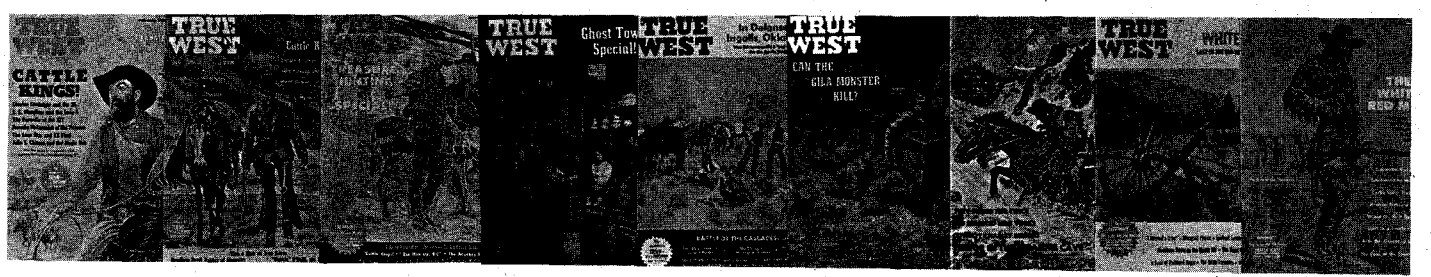

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Littleman's Strange Revenge

(Continued from page 59)

out of a dirty snowbank, the skeleton stripped of all flesh by beasts. Only the head remained intact, protected inside solidly frozen snow and ice. Using a sharp pointed rock he dug it out.

Not picking up the gruesome object, he gazed down at the very life-like features a minute or two. Then he turned away, retreating from the death trap.

Now he knew. The dead Paiute was Dobby, who had plunged over to his death that snowy night the previous October.

Littleman's vengeance trail had ended. Returning to Navajo Mountain, he resumed a normal life. So far as he knew the Paiutes never again used their secret trail. With the hated chief's end the sporadic killing and pillaging in Navajo country concluded.

The mummy, protected by the cliff overhang, remained in good condition for many years longer. When white men opened up the remote country, sightseers often visited the rim to look over at the mummified Paiute.

A Cherokee Account of Sequoyah

(Continued from page 13)

left and went toward the west. When they left they circled around through what they call Mexico; when they left they went toward Texas.

"There, about midway, while they were going along, night overtook them, and right there they tied up the horses that they were riding.

"And when they had used up their corn, the feed for their horses, Sequoyah spoke: 'We have used up our corn,' he stated. 'Let us go hunt corn,' he told the young men who were with him.

"Then they left.

" 'I am going to go toward the west,' Sequoyah told them, 'And you, you two young men: Here! Go hunt for corn toward the south,' he told them.

"So the young men left, and Sequoyah went toward the west when he left.

"But he did not leave before he had said this to those two young men: 'If you come back and I have not yet come back, you two must hunt for me,' he told them. 'Follow behind in the way that I went. Follow me,' he told these young men. 'The way will be plain. Every now and then upon the trees I will make a mark—just every now and then. By these marks you two will know in which direction I have gone. You two must follow these markings,' he said to them. 'For a certainty you two must watch for them while you are going along,' he told the two young men.

"So after the two young men had hunted for corn and returned, for a fact Sequoyah was not there.

"Then they searched about for the exact way that he had gone. So they followed behind in the way that he had gone. Every now and then they found a tree that was plainly marked. It was evident that he had passed that way because the tracks of his horse were there. The horse tracks and the markings upon the trees were what they were following.

"When they had gone a long way it became dark. They stayed all night there where they were, and when morning came they left. The trees were still marked in the same manner, and the tracks of the horse were there.

"Then in about the middle of Texas, while they were going along, the markings upon the trees ended. They searched about for the way in which Sequoyah had gone but they could not find it. For four days they hunted for Sequoyah, then when they had given up on finding him, Sequoyah's attendants returned to the Cherokee Nation.

"The young men returned to Sequoyah's home. Then these two young men told what had happened to them where they had been.

" 'We lost Sequoyah,' they stated.

"Then the old men questioned them very much about what had happened."

OFFICIALS of the Cherokee Nation were far from satisfied with Worm's story. In 1845 they sent a fact-finding committee to Mexico to check upon the accuracy of Worm's reporting.

"And then they told about it, and this is what they said: 'Somewhere in the middle of Texas we used up our corn, the feed for our horses.

" 'And then Sequoyah said to us, "We have used up our corn," he stated; and then this is what he said to us, "Let us hunt some," he said. "You two go south to hunt it," he said to us. And then Sequoyah himself: "I am going toward the west," he told us.

" 'So we did what he said to do. We went toward the south, hunting for corn. But Sequoyah went toward the west when he left,' these two young men said, in telling about it.

" ' "If you two come back and I have not returned, then you two go hunt for me," he said to us,' said the young men in telling about it. ' "The direction in which I went will be plain. I will have the trees marked. Every now and then you will be finding these marked trees. They are what you will be finding, and you probably can catch up with me while I am going along," he said to us,' the young men said.

" 'Truly as we went along we found the markings upon the trees. We also followed the tracks of his horse. But sometime later they ended—the markings upon the trees and the tracks of the horse that Sequoyah was riding. All of it, any trace of the way that he had gone, ended.

" 'We had a great desire to find him. Then we began to hunt about for him, and we hunted about there in the wilderness for four days. We went all about in that rough country, but there were no horse tracks anywhere. All the horse tracks ended there, and the markings upon the trees also ended,' these young men stated.

"Then the very old wizards prepared to find out what had become of Sequoyah. Then they conjured, these old men, wizards, seven in number; they conjured and examined for the direction in which he had gone. They thought that he might have been killed, or that he had lost his way. In their conjuring they examined, but what these Cherokees found out was that Sequoyah was a great

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wizard, and a complete sorcerer. He himself had done something and had moved away from the young men. And somewhere there something had happened to him. That is what they found out in their conjuring; this which I have just written is what the Cherokee old men found out.

"Now! This which is written here is all that I just wrote."

A comparison of this plodding narrative with Worm's colorful official story, sprinkled with dramatic confrontations of the perils presented by wild Indians, Texas weather, and Texans, makes this sound like what really happened, and makes the accepted version sound like the work of a gifted romancer. Take your choice.

In the main, the Cherokees have small talent for lying. But they are imaginative. And it is easy to believe that one needs all the imagination that he can muster when he has to confess to stony-faced tribal elders the melancholy truth: "We lost Sequoyah."

Come One, Come All!

(Continued from page 33)

I HAD BEEN in office about two weeks and so far it had been a financial blank. I hadn't taken in a dollar and it was strictly a fee office.

I was just leaving the hotel one morning when the phone rang and the clerk called, "It's for you, Mr. Root."

My old friend, Frank Calhoon, was on the line. He informed me that Theodore Petersen, a rancher, had hired a young man who had been with him a month. He gave the hand a check for $34.00. This man, named Michaels, had forged seven other checks for $34.00 each and cashed them all in Midland's various stores and the hotel, and then bought a ticket to Rapid City. I asked Frank to send me any further information he could gather as to description, scars, peculiarity of speech, or any other thing that might identify Michaels.

He said he would do the best he could and get it in the mail. The information was meager but there was a real good snapshot which had been taken at the Petersen ranch.

I checked the file of posters I had accumulated, and one of them was my man. He was wanted for armed robbery in Wisconsin.

The local paper fixed up some wanted posters for me and I shot them out to the West in large numbers.

Within the week I got a call from a deputy sheriff at Cheyenne, Wyoming. He said he had been down to Belle Fourche on a horse stealing deal and was returning to Cheyenne by way of the old narrow gauge railroad. This man got on at Deadwood. The deputy got into a conversation with him, and gleaned the information that he was headed for Denver where he had a girl. The deputy must have given Michaels quite a line as he actually got the address of the girl. The deputy didn't know he was wanted until he got to Cheyenne where he saw my poster in the sheriff's office.

I called Burns Detective Agency in Denver and they picked him up at the new post office where the girl said he had gone for mail. It was splattered all

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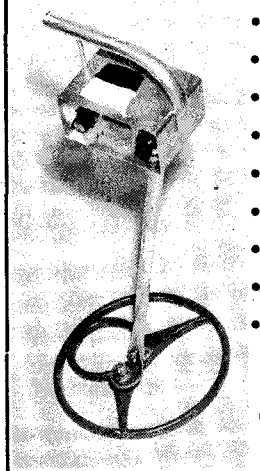

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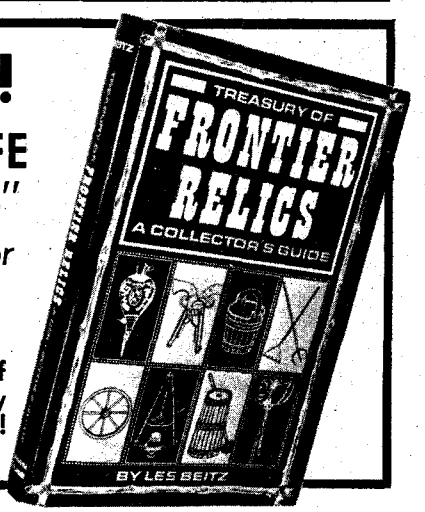

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over the front page of the Denver *Post* under the heading, "First Arrest Made in the New Denver Post Office."

Within three hours Michaels was in the city jail.

I caught the five a.m. train west. About seven the following morning I was in Denver. I ate breakfast, then went to police headquarters.

The officer who took me down to the cell block asked, "Can you identify this man?" I said I thought I could. I glanced in and saw five or six men playing cards.

The jailer said, "Stand up, men, and face this way."

"That's him," I said. "Come over here close, Michaels." He came right over. I told him I was taking him back that night at eleven.

The police treated me fine; gave me a police car with driver and showed me points of interest.

At about 10:30 two policemen and I took the handcuffed prisoner to the train. The train was stuck in a snowdrift for four hours. As soon as it was light I took the cuffs off. I put them on again when it got dark. I locked my gun up in my suitcase, slipped a cuff on my left hand and on his right. This was my third night with no bed. I went right to sleep.

The train was eight hours late on account of snow tie-ups. We had a long wait at Rapid City but got out on regular schedule twenty-four hours late; got to Philip at the usual time.

Michaels said, "There is no use fighting. I will just plead guilty and serve my time."

At Philip I went into the depot, called the state attorney, and gave him the lowdown. He told me to take Michaels right on down to Ft. Pierre before the circuit judge "in chambers."

This I did. The judge gave him a two-year sentence and as I didn't have a jail, they held him in the county jail at Ft. Pierre till the next day. Then we proceeded to Sioux Falls State Penitentiary. There I heard the big steel door close behind him. I don't know whether they picked him up at the end of his sentence on the Wisconsin charge or not. This was my first official act as sheriff.

FORTY-EIGHT years after the celebration at Manila, I was living in Blunt and was in the building business. I was doing some work in Bison, about 225 miles from home. One weekend on my return to Bison, I decided to take a different route. I had business in Philip so went around that way.

As I neared the bottom of Bridge Creek, I saw a stalled car. A woman waved; I stopped and asked her what was wrong. She said that they had a leak and were out of water. The car was hot and they thought it was a broken hose. At this point, a man too fat to crawl under the car, got up and said, "I think it's the heater hose but I will have to jack her up to get under there."

I slipped out of my overcoat, crawled under, and said, "Yes, it's the heater hose. Get me a piece of wire and a pair of pliers and I think I can fix it."

I took out my knife and cut the hose off straight and it still barely reached.

The woman lowered herself so I could hear and said, "He is getting wire from the fence."

Then she said, "I see you have a Hughes County license. You look familiar."

At that instant I recognized her voice. I didn't answer but just laughed out loud.

A second later she said, "Well, Fred Root, how do you happen out here just when we need you?" She had recognized my laugh.

Just then her husband returned with the wire and pliers. I had the car fixed in a jiffy.

I got a can from my car and put him to carrying water from the creek.

Then I told her, "I got up this morning in Blunt and told my wife, 'Echo Tenney is broke down on Bridger Creek', and I came out as fast as I could. How's that for a forty-eight-year stretch?"

The Gambling Sheriff

(Continued from page 35)

first was written April 20, 1875—"Heard of death of Mrs. Owens." The secret of this woman's identity was buried with her.

The second sentence was written March 25, 1877, two years later: "Coach north. Full of passengers. Owens and family here. Loaned him plough." The word "family" suggests several things but may have been only Hunton's way of avoiding mention of Johnny's second wife, Serena, who deserted the ranks of the dance hall girls at Fort Laramie's infamous Hog Ranch for Johnny and the Chug Springs Station. She, too, is something of a mystery. No one knows how long she stayed with him but they were eventually divorced because, the story goes, she had an aversion to the gambling which was second nature to Johnny. Considering her background, this seems almost ridiculous.

At some time, presumably in the early eighties, Johnny disposed of his property and took over the Hog Ranch. Possibly he only had someone running the ranch. Hunton is known to have done this for several years. But as there is little indication that he owned the place after he went to Lusk, it seems reasonable to conclude that he sold out, probably to Hunton.

The Hog Ranch was a rough place, frequented not only by soldiers but by every kind of character passing through the Territory. It was the scene of many a brawl that ended in death but, after all, it wasn't much worse than the stage station. Johnny was, by virtue of his training there, competent in emergencies. He possessed, moreover, a strange standing. He was respected by both law abiding citizens and outlaws. For some reason, perhaps because he was close-mouthed and a good listener, he had the confidence of both. The story is told that at one time during the Hog Ranch days he prevented a northbound stage carrying Fort Laramie's payroll from being robbed. The road agents, stopping at the Hog Ranch, had disclosed their plans to Johnny. He made a fast ride to Chug

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Springs and substituted himself for the regular guard. When the agents materialized out of the dusk near Eagle's Nest, Johnny casually waved his hand at them, saying, "Not tonight, boys."

Ordinarily, no doubt, Johnny would not have betrayed a confidence, but as Russell Thorpe, owner of the stage line, was a friend of his and had done him some favors, he decided it wouldn't do to allow that stage to be robbed if he could prevent it.

Late in 1886 as the Burlington and Missouri Railroad crept toward the Black Hills, Lusk was a raw, new town at the end of the rails. It was full of excitement, speculation and a miraculously expanding population. John Hunton, Hiram B. Kelly and Thomas Swan were elected commissioners of Laramie County which then included two-thirds of the eastern strip of Wyoming Territory. One of their first official acts was to appoint John Owens as special deputy at Lusk to help keep the lid on.

This appointment shoved Johnny out of obscurity and started him toward a second forty years of an entirely different kind of life. Although he was forty-three he had yet to become the colorful public figure that he was known to be later. He brought nothing with him from the old life except his skill with cards and guns and his reputation as a solid citizen, paradoxical as this may seem.

JOHNNY took being a lawman seriously enough, but for some unexplained reason he promptly started a saloon and dance hall in Lusk. Perhaps, conscious of his new position, he preferred to do his gambling in his own back rooms. Like everything else in Lusk, his place went full blast from the start.

In January, a month after he became deputy, he captured a desperado named McCoy who promptly escaped with the help of the guards Johnny had placed over him. A few weeks later the deputy redeemed himself, in his own eyes at least, by taking McCoy away from the lynch mob which had recaptured him. Johnny took the prisoner to Cheyenne to stand trial for murder. Lusk citizens were not pleased. Johnny resigned but was immediately reappointed.

During the next year he started a stable of racing horses, providing another source of entertainment and gambling. With so much going for him, Johnny grew prosperous. While he remained a quiet, friendly man whose responsibility as a lawman weighed heavily upon him, the one visible sign of his affluence was his dress. He grew more meticulous, wearing only clothes of excellent quality.

After Johnny's experience with Bill McCoy he apparently concluded it wasn't wise to be lenient. The next time he tangled with an outlaw the story was different.

Late in 1889 Johnny sold his property in Lusk and followed the rails to Newcastle, another little town roaring itself into existence at the mouth of Cambria Canyon where coal for the railroad had been discovered.

He promptly built another saloon, adding to it within months a music hall

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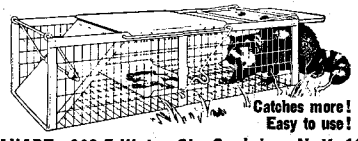

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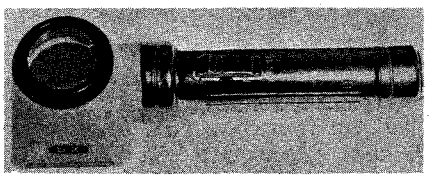

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called the "Castle Theater." It featured both resident and traveling artists and offered a variety of entertainment. The saloon became known as the "House of Blazes" for the guns which blazed behind its scarred doors, Johnny's included. His reputation had darted ahead of him to Newcastle. The stories told were exaggerated but if Johnny heard them, he ignored them. If they gave the impression that he would as soon shoot a man as greet him, Johnny didn't deny it. For instance, there was one to the effect that he had killed five Negroes in a Crawford, Nebraska, saloon which drew a sordid picture of his shooting down men as he would bottles on a fence.

This, whispered in Newcastle, had a salutary effect even on the none too sedate citizens and added to the awe with which he was regarded. He told his son, years later, how he had once walked into a saloon in Crawford to find the sheriff pinned against the wall by some Negroes. He lost no time in going to his aid. When he and the sheriff left, the Negroes were dead and Johnny carried a pistol slug in his side. A heavy leather belt he wore prevented him from being seriously wounded.

From the saloon brawl killing of Jim Davis in 1891 to the tragic, farcical death of drunken William Davis in 1911 at Cambria, Johnny's years were highlighted with a number of such episodes.

JOHNNY was elected Sheriff of Weston County in 1892 just at the end of the Johnson County War when northeastern Wyoming was in a chaotic condition. Rustlers were numerous and protecting stock seemed hopeless. Men of both the Republican and Democratic Parties asked Johnny to run for the office because they thought he would be a sheriff the outlaws couldn't "thumb their noses at."

Johnny's success in cleaning out the rustlers was spectacular. With the killing of Fred Timms and Fred Truax and the capture of an accomplice named Thomas in a swift battle on the mud cliffs of South Beaver in 1896, he had this racket under control. Outlaws gave Weston County a wide berth rather than encounter Johnny Owens.

His sixteen years as sheriff was interrupted once by the election of William Miller in 1898. Miller served three years of a four-year term and was killed by Indians at the Battle of Lightning Creek, the last Indian fight in Weston County. Johnny was one of the posse with Miller at the time. Fred Coates was appointed to complete Miller's term and Owens was made deputy. Johnny was elected again in the fall of 1904.

During his second year as sheriff, Johnny married fair-haired, quiet Addie Parker. They had a son born in 1891. Addie was, as far is as known, a dance hall girl but she proved to be a good wife and mother. She seemed to share Johnny's compassion for people and was seldom too busy or ill to go out of her way for others. She was not a strong woman and died in 1906 after several years of poor health.

Meanwhile Johnny had figured in the hanging of "Diamond L. Slim" Clifton. He was one of several lawmen credited with trying to coax a confession from the reluctant murderer of a young ranch couple. After Slim finally admitted his guilt and showed where the bodies were buried, cowboys and ranchers in a strangely hushed and orderly mob surprised Sheriff Miller, taking Slim and hanging him from the railroad bridge. They dispersed as quietly as they had come and no one could say with certainty afterward who did or did not take part in the affair.

Johnny's sincere identification with his job moved him to make an effort to teach youngsters that "crime doesn't pay." His frequent contact with young men starting a criminal career distressed him, and his attempts to demonstrate the futility of such a life may have been clumsy but they were direct and concrete. He had never heard of audio-visual education but he utilized the theory. Gathering his son and all the boys in the vicinity around when he had to move a prisoner, Johnny would weight the man down with handcuffs and leg-irons, then parade him in front of the boys, explaining how he had broken the law and what the punishment would be.

One such prisoner, Logan Blissard, whom Johnny was escorting to the State Penitentiary at Rawlins in March of 1906, escaped by jumping through the window of the men's room on the train. With the help of the Kimball County, Nebraska, sheriff, Johnny tracked him to the Fetterman ranch where Johnny did his best to persuade Blissard to give up and return to custody peacefully.

Blissard carried 6 feet and 175 pounds of enviable youth which invariably appealed to Johnny and he put forth his best efforts of persuasion, hoping to convince the boy he had a chance and would have help from the people of Newcastle when he had served his sentence. The boy's consistent answer was "I'd rather be dead than in prison. For God's sake, shoot straight and don't cripple me!" When he jumped Johnny, he was not crippled but dropped like a stone with a bullet in the middle of his forehead.

There was so much ado about this that the Newcastle paper printed the proceedings of the coroner's inquest at Kimball to put the facts before the people and dispel the fancy. But though the coroner's jury stated that Johnny's act was "justifiable in his performance of his official duty," it is not unusual to hear even today on mention of Johnny's name, "Sure, he was the sheriff who shot Logan Blissard in the back when he was handcuffed!"

By 1907 authorities were beginning to crack down on gambling. Whether Johnny waited until then to dispose of his saloon or whether he had done it earlier is not clear. At any rate, he was arrested for gambling at another saloon in the early 1900s. If he had still owned his own place at the time, he would not have been caught in another. The charge evaporated, however, or perhaps he paid a fine. If he continued to gamble he was extremely discreet about it.

When he ran for sheriff in the 1910 election he was defeated by eleven votes. There was something about this election

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to which Johnny violently objected. He contested the vote and apparently had enough grounds to bring suit. The case dragged on for two years during which his opponent served as sheriff. At the beginning of 1911 Johnny was hired as night watchman at the coal mining camp, Cambria, seven miles up the canyon from Newcastle.

One source states that Johnny was hired specifically because the coal company was having trouble with a man called "Bottle-ass" Davis—true name, William. Davis delighted in getting rip-roaring drunk of an evening and shooting at every lighted window as he shuffled the length of the canyon. The miners boggled this sport but no one cared to take a loaded gun away from a drunk. The Newcastle sheriff apparently considered this a minor problem and not his concern. Johnny was hired to take a little action.

His very first night on the job, February 17, 1911, he was jerked out of a light sleep by loud voices and a shot under the window of his room which was over the company offices and right on the street. He was partly dressed in seconds and out into the black of a moonless night. Running toward the voices he went close enough to distinguish two men who by sound and contour he knew to be Davis and his friend, Duffy.

Both were drunk and all but oblivious when Johnny said, "Stop that shooting and put up your hands." Duffy veered off toward the blacksmith shop and kept on going. Davis aimed a shot at Johnny that cooled his left cheek as it passed. Hearing the gun cock again, Johnny aimed at the sound and fired. Sure that he had hit Davis he yelled for the night watchman to bring a light and went off after Duffy whom he marched back. By that time men had gathered, the doctor was sent for, and it was plain that Davis was fatally wounded. He was carried to the hospital where in his last few moments of life he seemed to be amazed that it was "all up . . . I am shot through and through, Johnny Owens, that s—o—b!" But when asked if he had any trouble with Owens he said, "No, I didn't see Owens." And Johnny testified that although he heard Davis' gun cock and his last bullet was fired almost in Johnny's face so that the flash blinded him momentarily, he never saw Davis' gun.

It was a dark night, indeed. Johnny, self-condemned, went immediately to the Newcastle sheriff, gave him the gun he had taken from Davis and told him the whole story. The coroner's jury ruled that the killing was unjustifiable, but at the hearing of the justice of the peace, F. R. Cooper exonerated Johnny, saying that "a drunken man with a gun was a menace to society."

Whether maliciously or in good faith, the sheriff charged Johnny with murder but the County Attorney refused to file against him so he was not put in jail. When the case came to court the next September the judge dismissed it, saying that a verdict of guilty was not probable and an expensive trial would have been more criticized than the dismissal.

Johnny's son, Sterling, was married in 1912 and the next year the Owens-Hack-

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ney case was settled. In 1912 Johnny served the last six months of the sheriff's term and, under the terms of the settlement, each man was paid for one year.

JOHNNY had had enough. More than willing to put this chapter of his life behind him, Johnny went to Rawlins to work as a guard at the State Penitentiary. A short time later when the State Industrial Institute was being built at Worland using convict labor, Johnny was sent there in charge of the prisoners. When the work was finished he stayed on as guard until he retired in 1921 at the age of seventy-eight.

Not long before his retirement, a tenuous thread reached out of Johnny's past and entangled him. One day when he happened to be in Thermopolis he contributed to a fund being collected along the streets for a woman who had been crippled in an accident. The answers to his casual questions about her whetted his curiosity strangely. He arranged to meet her.

It would be impossible to imagine his feelings when he found her to be the once lovely Serena, her beauty smudged by the years. Something—the ghost of an old tenderness, the compassion which had ruled him for so long—would not permit his walking away from her. He married her and took her to Worland with him. After his retirement they moved back to Thermopolis where they lived contentedly until Johnny died on his birthday, August 11, 1927, at the age of eighty-four. Serena was given three more years in which to ponder the kindness of this man whose character was like a prism with many facets, a few of which were the soft-spoken, gentle friend and husband, the astute gambler and businessman and the truculent lawman whose aim was so deadly.

King of the Westerns

(Continued from page 3)

Geenevum Montfort or Duke of the Circle K, as the cowboys called him. I love humor—there was so little of it in westerns of that day. It was hard work and little pay so I figured I might as well be entertained while I wrote.

One Duke story I started: "I'd just dropped off in a peaceful little doze, leaning back against the bunkhouse wall in my rope-bottom chair, when somebody grabs a fistful of shirt about chest high and yanks me up so fast seems like I smelled scorched hair. My shutters fly open like they were on springs.

"It's the boss of the Circle-K and he's so riled up his eyes'ud light a cigarette at twenty feet. Them droopy moustaches are quivering at the ends and his teeth are chattering like he'd just finished a nap on the North Pole.

" 'Buck,' he shouts, 'you've had a hul three days now and you ain't smooth-talked ole "Blisterback" Shultz into withdrawin' that claim yet! Ye're supposed to be the dip-plomat around here. I'm givin' you another chance and if you don't come through this time, I'm gonna recommend a set of false teeth for you!'

"He sets me back down, about two feet to the right of my chair, and stomps off, raising little spurts of dust from between the flooring boards as he goes.

" 'Bet he got more hair than shirt that time!' grins Broomweed Biggs as he glances at the spot on my chest I'm rubbing. 'Glad the boss didn't give me the job of talking sense into a locoed old gazoot like Blisterback!'

" 'Yeah, but he gave you the job of helping me, you flea-brained idjit,' I spits at the lanky cowpoke.

" 'Let's git movin!'

"I grabs my hat, throws leather on my nag, Buzzardbait, and heads south, Broomweed trailing along half asleep on his bleary-eyed bay."

And titles! I just wouldn't send out a story unless I at least *thought* the title unusual. Judge for yourself on a few I see in this "giraffe" stack of magazines —like, for instance, Bulls Don't Wear Drawers; Bring Your Own Damned Caskets; Death is Mighty Permanent; Lion Fuzz Toasted; Life Begins at the Gallows; The Mine with the Barn Door; Hell Would Be Welcome; Murder Ain't Polite; Pa, He Just Hates Rattlesnakes; Stingy Men are Spendthrifts; Bulls of a Feather; If You're Gonna Cuss, Man, Cuss Loud!; P. S.—Bullet Follows Tomorrow; and so on and on.

Similes—were they fun! "The sound drifts across that swamp fog as soft and low as a flea breathing on cotton." There had to be ten or fifteen of these in every story!

Names I loved also. "Possum-Eyed Bill," "Calaboose Callahan," "Puddin' Face Guley," "Skunk Face Derrick," "Bettersave Mathis," and the like and they would make such statements as, "Salty-eared jacksniper!"

Corny? Brother, how much can you raise in X number of acres! But it was fun (I guess) and I'd probably do it all over again if I had to.

About that list of old western pulp writers—I wish every one of them alive would write me and I'd appreciate a line from the closest of kin to those who have passed on. I wonder (maybe I'm too close to the subject) if it wouldn't be fun to run at least one story from all of the old greats, explaining that it is an example of that swashbuckling era. Of course, not in one issue! We could spread them out over issues as long as you would be interested. Maybe it's a bad idea. Oh, well . . .

FOR INSTANCE, would you like to finish Walt Coburn's "The Brush Poppers"? It starts off like this:

"Slim Fogarty, Arizona Ranger, watching from a screen of manzanita up on the rim above Brushy Basin, told himself it beat any show or circus or rodeo he had ever witnessed. This was the third time Slim had watched it, a one-man hidden audience. And for the first time since he had taken his oath of office and been given his secret commission, he was actually sorry that he was a law officer, that he was duty bound to ride down yonder and spoil forevermore that daily show. He was watching it now for the last time.

"The big brindle ketch dog. Wild cattle scattering, losing themselves in the brush, where it was too slanting for horse and cowboy. The old white mustached cowhand on his fast, well-trained cow horse. The small boy on the blue roan mule. They were from a little old two-bit ranch at Hackberry Springs, and they came into Brushy Basin with the sunrise. . . .

"That was where the old brush-popper cowpuncher on his restive, sleek-coated, steel-dust horse waited with a loop cocked in his rope. And in behind a patch of granite boulders the small boy on his blue-roan mule hid, his loop built.

"The big yellow dog and a spotted long-horned Mexican steer broke out of the brush, the dog nipping the big steer's hocks.

"A hoarse yell from the old cowpuncher. The ketch dog ran off ahead, and the steer charged down the wash . . . The old cowhand on his fast horse gave chase, holding his loop back across his faded blue denim shoulder to keep it from fouling in the brush. The other end of the ketch rope was tied hard and fast in a loop that fitted over his saddlehorn.

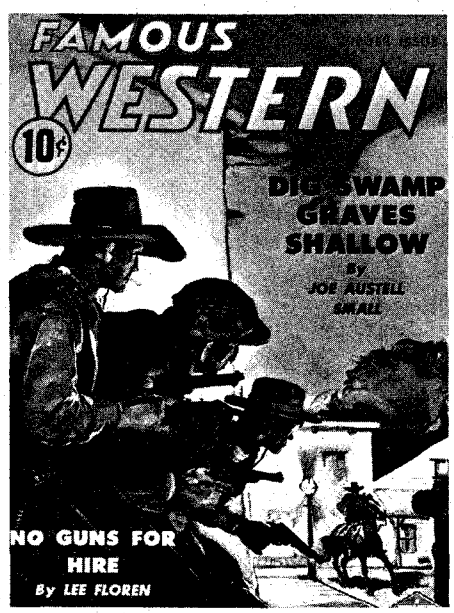
"The big sorrel gelding put the rider alongside the racing outlaw steer. There was a fifty-foot open clearing. Plenty for one throw. The loop swung once, twice, sped out, dropped over the long horns. The horse swung off at just the right angle as the rope jerked taut, and the big spotted steer piled up.

" 'Heel'im, Gen'ril!' barked the old cowpuncher.

"The small boy on the mule got there right now, loop swinging slowly as the mule came in around the roped steer. Then the swinging loop dipped down, picked up both hind legs of the steer. The mule swung off as the boy yanked his loop tight. The rope pulled taut. The steer was stretched out on the ground.

"Not a lost motion of ketch dog, man, horse, boy or mule. Perfect teamwork!"

Okay—I got carried away! See you slant-eyed, mule-headed, sons-of-a-cross-eyed bangtail purty soon!—Hosstail.



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Truly Western

(Continued from page 4)

to Anaconda to get supplies and returned in a few days, ate another meal, and went up the East Fork to his mine. Said he'd be back that fall, but he never returned. So there must be a man's and dog's skeletons, a long rifle, and a gold mine somewhere in that country.

My dad and I made several horseback trips looking for his diggings but never found it. Perhaps someday a logger or hunter will be luckier than we were.—Woodrow Carey, R. D. 1, Philipsburg, Montana 59858.

Rare Flag

Dear Joe:

I have demolished several old houses here in Auburn and in the walls of some have found quite a lot of old items, letters, buttons, money, old papers and magazines, some of which are 100 years old, others 1898, 1900 and on.

The most valuable thing I have found is an old flag with thirty-five stars on it. The stars are in a circle with a large one in the center. I did some research on it and found out that it was our flag for one year and fourteen days when West Virginia became a state. Within ten minutes after I found it between the walls where it had been hidden all these years since the Civil War, I was being offered all sorts of prices for it, from $5 to $500 and various offers to swap guns and other items. But I gave it to my son who is at this writing over in Viet Nam.

I save all the magazines—T.W., F.T. and O.W.— and you can put me down as one of your many contented readers.—John C. Stuart, P. O. Box 287, Auburn, California 95603.

Gift Copies

Dear Hosstail:

In regard to your article about giving magazines to soldiers, it is a wonderful idea but I couldn't afford to send all of the copies I had collected in past years.

So I called the nearest Marine Recruiting Station, asking if they could take care of it for me. They were more than happy to do so. If it works so well with them, why wouldn't it work with the Army, Air Corps, Coast Guard, etc. recruiting stations? This way, our servicemen all over the world would get the magazines and I think these recruiting stations know much better than we where they are needed most.

Thought I'd let you know in case anyone else has this problem. They could send the gift offer (if they want to keep their old copies) or gift subscriptions. These recruiting officers will send the gift subscriptions to certain headquarters where many men will get a chance to read each issue instead of just one.—Marilyn Cochran, 8724½ Bedford Avenue, Los Angeles, 45, California.

Dear Hosstail:

Little did I know when I wrote you the letter about the men out here needing magazines what a reaction I would get! Not that I'm complaining. Joe, by actual count to date (and it looks like they'll be coming for months yet!) I have received thirty-six letters and seventeen packages of magazines!

(Continued on page 72)

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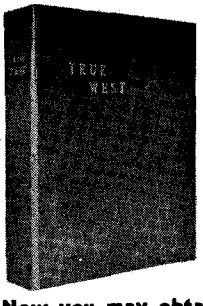

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WANTED: Paintings by JOE RUIZ GRANDEE. Oils, water colors, pen and inks. Send description and price to Jack L. Erickson, 3307 Lynnwood Drive, Arlington, Texas.

Miscellaneous

HISTORICAL NARROW Gauge Calendar (1967) complete with data also Historical New Mexico Missions—Pueblos (1967), 12 beautiful pen & ink illustrations. ONLY 1.25 each postpaid WESTERN AMERICANA ART, Salida, Colorado.

INSTANT CAMPER. Fits any vehicle. Worlds Finest Camper. Send $1. Refundable for Safteygolden Reflectorstrip, Brochures. Instant Camper, 2145 Holly woodway, Burbank, California.

BILL PROBLEMS? Poor Credit no trouble. Not a loan company. Send for free application. Automatic Acceptance, 318TW, Broadway Blvd., Reno, Nevada.

GET $800 CASH now—pay back $37.66 per month—includes all charges—Send name, address, age to MURDOCK', DEPT. 569, Box 659, Poplar Bluff, Missouri.

FIRE SALE: LOWER PRICES for Antique Bottles over 1,000 in all. Many Green Mosses. Valley Stamp Co., P.O. Box 326, Farmington, Maine 04938.

RUBBER STAMPS. Office Mount, three lines, $1.80. Now $1.25/with stamp pad $1.90 Post Paid. Valley Stamp Co., P.O. Box 326, Farmington, Maine 04938.

WHERE TO FIND buried treasure, lost mines, ghost towns, battlefields. 1000's books, maps. Free catalog. Backcountry, Box 866-G, Tarzana, California 91356.

MAPS, PIONEER. "Southwest" (30"x50"), "Northwest" (21"x50"), $2.00 each. Hundreds of Historical notes. Maps, Box 56, Tijeras, New Mexico.

PRE-COLUMBIAN ART OF THE SOUTHEASTERN AMERICAN INDIAN, carefully reproduced from Indian designs found on shell gorgets of the Mississippian period, the dominent culture in the southeastern United States from 1200AD to 1540AD. Write for free list—30 prints available, size 9½" x 12½" on fine paper, a splendid addition to your home, office, school, or study—Gorgeous Gorget Enterprises Inc., Box 98, Calhoun, Tennessee 37309.

PLEASE POSTAGE & STAMP for information—small light (Elecorgas)—shades—$1.50 each., Sad irons—$1.85, dealers needing, Ross, Kelly, Baker, Brotherton, Glidden or L.B.J. barbwire, write—castiron tea kettles $8.50, matched pair Spanish-American sword—in shields $50.00, violin bottle, clear, brown or blue $1.50.—Roberson's Trading Post, Box 264, Crawford, Texas 76638.

PROSPECTOR'S CLUB INTERNATIONAL: Why not join our (PC) club and receive monthly publications packed full of information on all phases of treasure hunting. Meet other hunters from the four corners of the earth. Send 25c in coin or stamps for full information on club and sample copy of newspaper. You'll be glad you did. Prospectors Club, P.O. Box 729, Odessa, Texas 79760.

SUFFERING FROM ARTHRITIS? Try Ginseng; Information Free. Write Ginseng, Ashville 52, N.C.

ROMANTIC "TAHITIAN" PERFUME Bewitchingly-Fragrant Liberal Sample .50. O'DELLS, Box 1703TW, Prescott, Arizona 86301.

PICTORIAL MAP OF ARIZONA'S Lost and Abandoned Mines, ghost towns, frontier military posts. Excellent for reference or framing. In color. $1.50 postpaid. Bob Cooper, 275 L Street, Salt Lake City, Utah.

"LOST 12 POUNDS in 14 days!"—Writes Ohio customer. No drugs, exercises, starving. Guaranteed.—$1.00. GLICK, Box 369-TW, South Pasadena, California 91030.

PROSPECTORS!! MINERS!! TREASURE HUNTERS!! ADVENTURERS!! Pamphlet shows how . . . where . . . to obtain mineral exploration money. Guaranteed. Send $1. Adlimco, Box 4539-W, Tucson, Arizona 85717.

GEM STONE PROSPECTING. Covers their occurrence, identification and location by states and counties. $3.00. D.V.V. Publishers, Box 16125, Salt Lake City, Utah 84116.

COLLECTORS: Composite photograph of Geronimo and related scenes with biographical summary. Two pieces 8 x 10 each. Suitable for companion framing. Excellent conversation pieces. $3.00. M. Howe, Box 7368 Waco, Texas 76710.

BULKYWOOL, TWO POUNDS $3.00. Sockwool, three ply $1.40. Grabbag Needles, Patterns $1.00. Quiltpatches 200—$1.00. Buttons 800—$1.00. Trimmings—Laces 50 yards $1.00. SCHAEFER, Champlain, New York 12919.

SLY SECRETS for Dominating and Influencing People. $1.00. Box 10601W, El Paso, Texas 79996.

20 ASSORTED CHRISTMAS CARDS with envelopes, $1.00. HORSE ART, P.O. Box 512, Novato, California 94947.

LINCOLN'S MURDERER Reward Poster. Nearly 2 feet long. $1.00. POSTER SHACK, Box 613-D, Tustin, California 92680.

WILL FORMS (2). Instructions written by lawyer. Who should make a will. When and how. Instructions cover all states. Ward, Ward, & Ward. Box 185, Fairfield, Alabama 35064.

WESTERN COLLECTOR—The pioneer monthly magazine for collectors. From barbed wire and branding irons to telephone insulators and bottles (the regular 12 page supplement "Bottle World" is included in each issue), from spoons and spurs to dolls and decoys, you'll discover as thousands of others have why Western Collector is the country's fastest growing collector's magazine. Special introductory offer: 15 issues, $5. Send check or money order to WESTERN COLLECTOR, 2031 Union Street, No. 506, San Francisco, California 94123. Offer expires November 30, 1967.

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Miscellaneous

TEXAS PROSPECTORS AND HISTORIANS MAP, by Harley & Vera Smith. Comes to you in 22 x 29 inches and in three colors. Lists 105 Army forts, Missions, ghost towns, Indian, cattle & military trails. Rock information, sunken ships off Padre and much more. Autographed if desired. $1.00 each. Smith's Publishing Co., P.O. Box 6018, Odessa, Texas 79761.

OIL BUGS. Bug and Lessons, $28.85. Box 577, Conrad, Montana 59425.

ASSAYING BOOK: for Prospectors, Assayers, Miners, Mineralogists, etc. Simplified and complete. Over 50 elements covered. $10.00 each. D.V.V. PUBLISHERS, Box 16125, Salt Lake City, Utah 84116.

AUSTRALIAN GOLD. Over 700 nuggets exceeded 100 ounces, thousands over 50-oz. Farmers still plow up beauties. Map, details of rich nugget areas, ripe for electronic survey, $2 from Australian author-scientist Dr. W. E. Osborne, Box 1171, Whittier, Calif. 90603.

BUILD YOUR OWN DELUXE TREASURE LOCATOR. Author-scientist Dr. W. E. Osborne has developed many military mine detectors, magnetometers, locators. Instructions, details of crystal-controlled locator, with built-in battery charger, $3. Magnetometer design for oil or metal, $7. Infrared locator design, $7. Osborne, Box 1171, Whittier, Calif. 90603.

SWEEPSTAKES CONTESTS. HOW TO WIN. WRITE FOR free particulars. General Contests, 1609-42 East Fith, Duluth, Minn. 55812.

THE HUMAN CANNOT INVESTIGATE or use a complete Universe of Time and Space with the normal five senses. If you have hunches or premonitions you are subconsciously using the Fourth Dimension. Stamped Addressed envelope to THE ORGANIZATION, Box 213, South Bend, Indiana 46624.

AUTHENTIC, ANTIQUE SQUARE NAILS. Limited offer. 6 for $1.00. Lee Ganther, Granton, Wisconsin 54436.

ORIGINAL INDIAN TERRITORY newspapers (Before 1900) $6.00 each, postage paid. (Special—order two; get one free). Albert Cullum, General Delivery, Overbrook, Oklahoma 73453.

DRUG SUNDRIES. Complete line of rubber goods. Nationally advertised brands. Vitamins, etc. Write for free catalog. Federal Pharmical Supply, Inc., 6652 North Western Avenue, Suite 110, Chicago 45, Illinois.

DON'T LET US DIE!

If you do not collect TRUE WEST and FRONTIER TIMES, how about passing them along to a friend, an old-timer, a hospital? The Veterans Hospitals especially want them! Leave them with your barber or in your doctor's office.

Seems like when we get the magazines into the hands of a new person, we've got another reader—so this help from you would be a terrific boost!

Watch for the
September FRONTIER TIMES
. . . on sale July 20

Truly Western

(Continued from page 69)

As you know, no one was supposed to send me anything but to all those addresses you carried in this editorial—but they did anyhow! Am I ever surprised.

All I can do with these is turn them over to the USO here in Saigon. They will send them to various USO field branches here in Viet Nam, and keep some of them for the men who come into Saigon from the field.

So I would appreciate it if you'd print the address of the place to send these magazines.

UNITED SERVICE ORGANIZATION
(or USO)
Saigon, Republic of Vietnam
APO San Francisco, California 96243

And that APO number is most important.

Some of the letters were friendly and chatty. Some others ask me to supply names of men over here who receive no mail from home. Again, I suggest that such letters be sent to the Saigon USO. There is a daily radio program here on the Armed Forces Radio Service on which such letters are read. This program is originated by the USO. Thanks for publishing my letter.—Wayne F. Hyde (we won't give his address this time, poor boy!).

In Defense of the "Different"

Dear Joe:

I enjoyed the story "Terror in the Mist" about John Turnow. I didn't know him personally, but my late friend, Millard Rose of Wenatchee, Washington, was raised in Grays Harbor County and knew the Turnow family quite well. He said even though John Turnow was considered queer by many people, he only wanted to be left alone and not be bothered by "do-gooders," who usually do more harm than good. When they locked up John in the booby hatch, he immediately decided the public was trying to do him harm. I've met several of these "queer people" in my life, and if you take time to understand them and not abuse or make fun of them, they're usually harmless and will do all they can to repay you for your kindness to them. I knew a queer fellow who worked for a religious section foreman on the railroad and this foreman was always trying to convert old Bill and make him stop swearing so much. One day he tried to hush up Bill by asking him what he'd do if Gabriel blew his horn. Old Bill thought for a minute, then said, "Well, I guess I'd give him half of the road!" I think Pete, the foreman, gave up trying after that.—Walt Thayer, Box 75, Wenatchee, Washington.

The Naked Truth

Dear Sir:

Somewhere in Boise, Idaho between 8th and 9th on Main Street a saloon operated a century ago. It was managed by James Lawrence who named it "The Naked Truth," and advertised his saloon in this astonishing fashion:

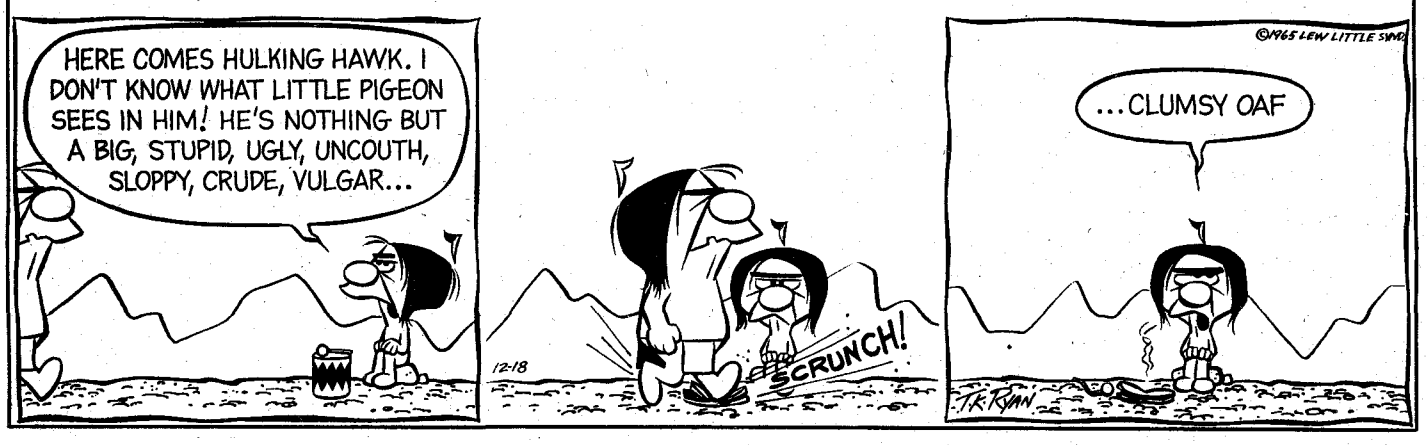
"Friends and Neighbors: Have just opened a commodious shop for the sale of liquid fire. I embrace this opportunity of informing you that I have commenced the business of making drunkards and paupers and beggers for the sober, industrious and respectable portion of the community to support. I shall deal in spirits that will incite men to deeds of riot, robbery and bloodshed and by so doing, diminish the comfort, augment the expenses and endanger the welfare of the community.

"I will undertake on short notice, for a small sum and with great expectations, to prepare victims for the asylum, poor farm, prison and gallows. I will furnish an article which will increase fatal accidents, multiply the number of distressing diseases and render those which are harmless incurable. I will deal in drugs which will deprive some of life, many of reason, most of prosperity and all of peace; a commodity which will cause fathers to become fiends; and wives, widows; children orphans; and a nuisance to the nation."

Although the public was duly warned by his printed billboard affixed to his saloon, the saloon prospered and did a rushing business.—E. Maxton Laughlin, 9720 Roosevelt Way, N.E., Seattle, Washington 98115.

SUBSCRIBE to RELICS
See page 57

TUMBLEWEEDS —by Tom K. Ryan



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IMP. TINY

.22 SIX SHOT DOUBLE ACTION REVOLVER .22 SHORT CALIBER

Just $14.50 and if you want one that shoots shorts, longs and long rifles without any adjustment then it's $21.50.

VEST POCKET .25 AUTO

Blue, just **$26.50** Ammo, if bought w/gun $1.65 box.

GARRUCHA Double Derringer

Widely known and highly respected throughout South America is this Garrucha .22 L.R. double derringer with 3" barrels and weighs 11 oz. Well made and beautifully nickled. Just **$17.50**

.22 CAL. DERRINGER

Double - Action 2 Shot Dual Barrel. An improved modern version of the "gambler's gun" .22 L.R. and .22 mag. cal. — flat and thin—weighs only 11 oz.—Built-in safety hammer block prevents firing if dropped. Easy to load and operate—Recessed head space for extra safety. Hammerless, with dual extraction—3½" Barrel. Overall length 5". Made by High Standard Mfg. Co., Hamden, Conn. New **$39.95**
Used but like new, $32.50.

M95 STEYR "T-BOLT" CARBINE

Original Straight-Pull Carbine. Weighs only 7½ lbs. 8x56R-caliber, all milled parts, multiple locking-lugs and positive gas deflectors. Good. 50 rounds military ammo FREE! ONLY **$15.00**

BRAND NEW M1 CARBINES

Commercial grade. In heavy demand. Regularly priced at $89.95. Now, brand new only **$65.00**
Extra 15-round magazines for 50c and extra 30 round magazines for $1.75. Extra 15-round . . . for $1.75 when bought with gun. Soft point hunting ammo, 50 rounds for $5.00 when bought with gun.

M1 CARBINE FOLDING STOCK

$22.95
Folding stock for the M1 Carbine ready to install. If purchased with the above carbine ..... only **$16.00**

REMINGTON MODEL 11

Riot gun. Rem. Mod 11. A truly fine gun. Brand new 20" cylinder bored barrel. Your for only **$100.00**
Brand new in orig. factory box.

"THE TRADE MUSKET"

.40 caliber smooth bore, percussion • 36" Barrel • Brass Barrell Bands • Steel Ramrod • Weight 5 pounds. Made as a hunting and defense weapon for the Indians of Brazil to withstand rugged use in the interior. A ideal ad unique long gun decorator, conversation piece and shooter **$17.95**

NEW ARMALITE AR 7

$49.95
Brand new
Used but like new sample, $37.50.

The gun you've read about at a new lower than ever price. 22 LR semi auto., dismantles in seconds without tools and stores in stock. Believe it or not, it also floats!

ERMA .22 LR AUTO.

Made in West Germany of excellent craftsmanship. Same size and weight as its famed predecessor. Primed for maximum accuracy. Specifications: .22 Long Rifle Caliber • 8 Shot Semi-automatic Magazine • Overall Length 9" • Weight of Pistol: 36 oz. • Checkered Walnut Grips • Open Notch Rear and Blade Front Sights • Barrel Length 4⅝" • Toggle Bolt Action.
All New at only **$59.95**
A few like new demonstrators at $47.50

ERMA .22 CAL. CARBINE

An ideal fast-handling .22 rifle perfect for varmint shooting and pest control, plinking or target shooting. A perfect training rifle for Boy Scouts and military academies. Except for the caliber, it has the exact same specifications as the M1 carbine. **$79.95**
Have a few like-new demonstrators for $59.95.

SPECIAL!

Regular $4.95 Penguin Pengun Tear Gas pen with one cartridge for just $2.95.

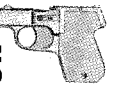
SENTRY, probably the best, lightest protection in this aerosol push button cannister about the size of a fountain pen. Extreme pain caused by this human repellant when sprayed in face and eyes of assailant. Spray made of oil and red pepper.

$2.95 postpaid.

SINGLE ACTION

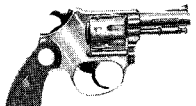
Copied from the Old West is this beautifully made West German single action revolver in 22 long rifle. ..... Only **$25.00**
When bought with this gun I can sell you an extra .22 Magnum cylinder for just $8.00.

THE BODYGUARD



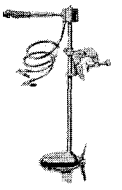
.22LR Derringer. Copy of Mossberg Brownie. Four shots fast as you can pull the trigger. Chrome finish **$22.50**

ROSSI



From Brazil comes in my opinion the best value yet and you can compare it if you like *with guns costing twice as much. And believe* it or not, they are packed in beautiful presentation cases. They come in 2" and 3" barrels. .22 caliber **$38.25**
Like-new demonstrator $29.00
This outstanding revolver in .32 caliber **$55.00**
Like-new demonstrator $42.50.

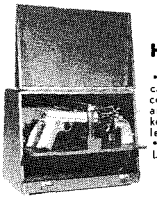
ELECTRIC FISHING MOTORS



BANTAM M-2. Helps you get to where the big ones are! Two speed motor takes the work out of fishing. Works on 12 volt or 6 volt. Nationally advertised at $49.95. My price **$28.95**

HUSKY M-10. This is the heavy-duty model. Its three speed motor will allow you to crawl at a snail's pace or move quickly to the next fishing place. Nationally advertised at $74.95. My price **$49.95**

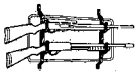
HANDGUN CASE



• New clamping bridge holds guns securely even if case is dropped. • Soft plastic grips. No moisture collecting felt. • Five gun removable tray. • Ammo and accessory compartment. • Locking catches with keys. • Black vinyl leatherette—inside and out. • Full length piano hinge.
• Smooth metal feet. ..... **Only $19.95**
Like new salesman sample $14.95.

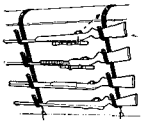
Original "G"-LOX GUN RACKS with the exclusive adjustable clamp. Clamp adjusts to fit any gun and holds it securely. No worry about gun jumping from clamp. The safest way to carry guns. Soft Walnut. Plastisol coated. Fully guaranteed. All hardware furnished.

Pick-up Trucks Station Wagons



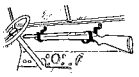
Fits over rear glass of Pick-up. Fits back of seat in Pick-up. Fits over side glass of station wagon. Fully adjustable
No. T-2—2 Guns $4.20 prepaid
No. T-3—3 Guns $5.20 prepaid
(Add $1, for locking feature—lock *not furnished*).

Passenger Cars



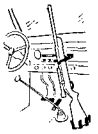
Fits over back of car seat. Easy to install & remove.
No. A-3—3 guns $6.20 prepaid
No. A-4—4 guns $7.20 prepaid

Jeep Dash Board



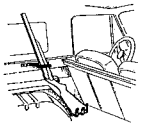
Mounts on panel under windshield or on dash board of Jeep.
No. J-1—1 gun $4.75 prepaid
No. J-2—2 guns $6.20 prepaid

International Scouts & Pickup Trucks



Fits dashboard on Int'l. Scout *& pickup truck.*
No. S-1—1 gun $6.20 prepaid
No. S-2—2 guns $7.20 prepaid

Ford-Bronco Gun Rack

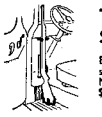


No. B-1—1 gun $6.20 prepaid

Trunk Lid Gun Rack

No. TL-1—1 gun $3.20 prepaid
No. TL-2—2 guns $4.20 prepaid

Truck Recess Step Mount



Bottom bracket mounts on step. Easy to install.
No. TR-1—1 gun $6.20 prepaid

Pick-up Truck Overhead Gun Rack

Easy to install Gun is readily accessible. Designed for trucks with metal interior roof lining
No. CR-1—1 gun $3.20 prepaid
No. CR-2—2 guns $4.20 prepaid

Jeep Dash Board Floor Mount

Top bracket mounts on dashboard. Bottom bracket mounts on floor.
No. FJ-1—1 gun $6.20 prepair

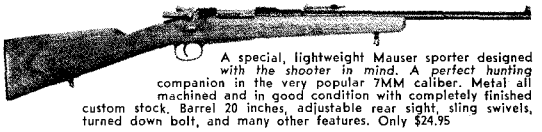
Ford-Bronco Carrier Center Mount

No. BC-2—2 guns $13.20 prepaid

Horseshoe Gun Rack

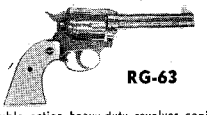
Guns, hats, towels, hunting equipment, gun belts, etc.
No. HS-1 $2.20 prepaid

M93 MAUSER SPORTER



A special, lightweight Mauser sporter designed *with the shooter in mind. A perfect hunting* companion in the very popular 7MM caliber. Metal all machined and in good condition with completely finished custom stock. Barrel 20 inches, adjustable rear sight, sling swivels, turned down bolt, and many other features. Only $24.95

RG-63

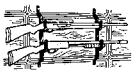


Double action heavy-duty revolver copied after the *old time single actions. This gun has a 5" barrel* and is 10" overall.
38 Special or 22 Magnum **$28.58**
22 Long Rifle **$26.00**

Jeep Carrier Center Mounting

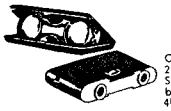
Fits all Jeeps Guns readily accessible to driver & passenger
No. JC-2—2 guns $13.20 prepaid

Wall Rack



Mounts on wall Mounts inside gun case
No. W-2—2 *guns* $4.20 prepaid
No. W-3—3 guns $5.20 prepaid
No. W-4—4 guns $6.20 prepaid
No. W-5—5 guns $7.20 prepaid

FOLDING SPORT GLASS



Compact folding Opera & Sport Glass, 2.5X magnification. Fits purse or pocket. Snaps open automatically. Leather covered body, nickel trim. 4¼" x 2½" x ¾" **$2.98**

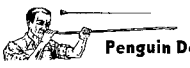
Spur Gun Rack

Polished anodized aluminum with embossed leather pad to protect gun. Mounts directly to wall. Choice of Gold or Silver anodized aluminum.
$3.25 pair prepaid

Dymo Labelmaker $5.25 ppd.

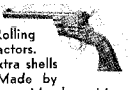
Make permanent, raised letter plastic labels . . . . in seconds, professional quality labels for pennies. Dial *letters, numbers, symbols,* squeeze handle. 1001 uses for the gun enthusiast. Extra tape just .75c per roll.

Penguin Dart Gun & Darts



Powerful-Long Range-Silent Lightwt. aluminum, over 4 ft. long. 6 Darts, dart holster, target & instructions.
$3.50 ppd.
Extra darts, $1.80 for 6 —Not sold separately.

MENDOZA K-62



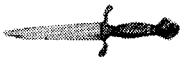
Single shot .22 S. L. LR. Rolling block action, double extractors. Ammo caddy carries 3 extra shells on each side of gun. Made by designers of world famous Mendoza Machinegun used by Mexican Army... **$16.95**
Choice of 4", 5" or 6" barrel, overall length with 6" barrel 9¾".

.45 HIP HOLSTERS

BRAND NEW ARMY SURPLUS Perfect & beautiful, brown leather,
$2.98
prepaid

Genuine U.S. Army RIFLE BORE CLEANER

2 Ounce can, will compare favorably with those retailing for .49.
1 CARTON of 48 cans for **$1.75**
1 CASE of 96 cans for **$2.25**
10 CASES total of 960 cans for **$18.00**



Fancy Dagger with Eagle claw clutching a ball. $1.98 PREPAID.

Fancy Death's Head Dagger. $1.98 PREPAID.

Handmade, all metal 4⅜", Philippine Bailsong Combat Knife. Closed it looks just like a ball point pen, opened it has a 4" razor sharp needle point knife blade. ..... **$7.98** postpaid.

.38 CALIBER HIP HOLSTERS

For 2" to 6" barrel .38's. Open top, complete with protective flap and belt hook.
used, exc. **$1.50** prepaid

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• Powerful Amplifier • Outside Volume Control • Special Varmint Speaker • Operates on Inexpensive Flashlight Batteries • Rugged, Dependable Motor And Turntable • 45 RPM • Rugged Cabinet • Lightweight, Carries In One Hand.
No portable game caller can be found as good as this one at nearly so low a price. This is truly the game caller for those who have said in the past that they would like to own a portable caller but could not afford it. This caller will last a lifetime with practically no upkeep. Most machines of this kind sell for up to $129.95. But Walter Craig scoops the field *and can offer you this quality* game caller for only **$89.95**
Like new salesman sample $59.95.

WALTER H. CRAIG

Box 927TW **Selma, Alabama 36702**

All items are brand new unless otherwise stated and all prices are F.O.B. Selma unless otherwise stated.

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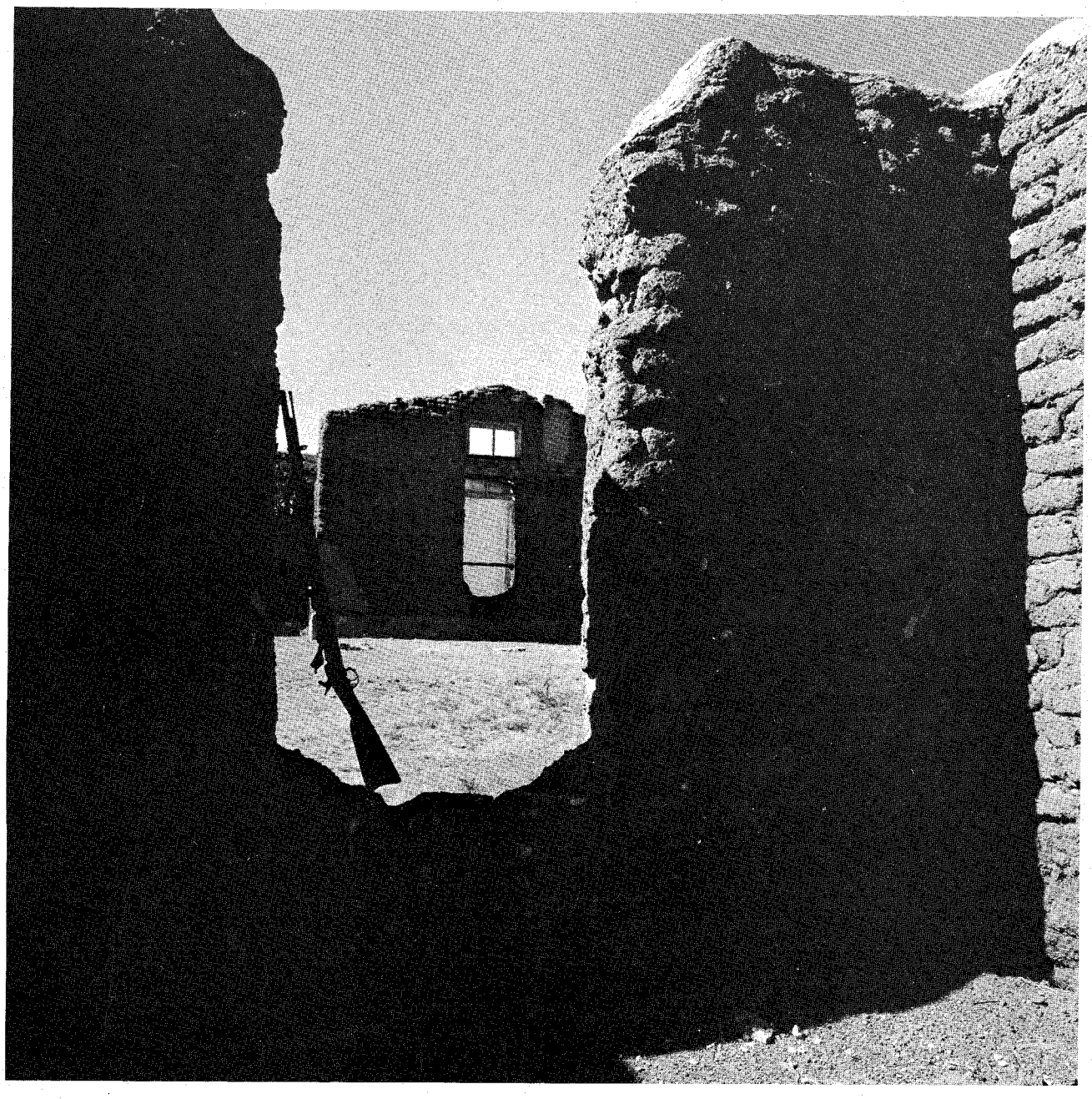
Frontier?



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